

6/5/24 Wednesday

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Our Oceans Now Face a 'Triple Threat' of Oxygen Loss, Extreme Heat and Acidification - Study

The triple threat of extreme heat, deoxygenation and acidification can last for as long as 30 days. The study also found that these water column-compound extreme events tend to occur in high latitudes and the tropics and can reduce habitable space by as much as 75%.

A new [study](#) has found that our planet's oceans are not only becoming warmer due to climate change, but are losing oxygen and becoming increasingly acidic as well. The study, published in AGU Advances, found that about a fifth of the world's ocean surface is vulnerable to this 'triple threat' hitting it at the same time.

"The global ocean is becoming warmer, more acidic, and losing oxygen due to climate change. On top of this trend, sudden increases in temperature, or drops in pH or oxygen adversely affect marine organisms when they cannot quickly adapt to these extreme conditions," the study writes. "These conditions are worse for marine organisms when such extremes occur together in the vertical water column."

"Marine extreme events such as marine heatwaves, ocean acidity extremes and low oxygen extremes can pose a substantial threat to marine organisms and ecosystems," the study added. "Such extremes might be particularly detrimental when they are compounded in more than one stressor."

The study notes that human-induced climate change, such as the burning of [fossil fuels](#), is the cause of this 'triple threat'. And not only are the effects of these phenomena grave, but they now last three times longer and are three times more intense than that of the early 1960s.

"The heat has been literally off the charts, it's been astonishing to see," said Andrea Dutton, a geologist and climate scientist at the University of Wisconsin, who was not involved in the study. When our oceans are subjected to excessive amounts of carbon dioxide, that carbon leads to an increased level of ocean acidity while also depleting oxygen levels. This creates a disastrous affect on marine life and their homes; and in some instances, can dissolve the shells of marine organisms.

"Marine life is being squeezed out of places it is able to survive," Dutton told [The Guardian](#).

"This paper makes clear that this is happening now and that these compound threats will push organisms past their tipping points."

"People have to recognize that oceans have been buffering us from the amount of heat we have been feeling on land as humans, but that this hasn't been without consequence."

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Former Meta Engineer Suing Company, Claims They Censored Pro-Palestinian Content

In December of 2023, Human Rights Watch reported that Meta's content moderation policies and systems appeared to be "increasingly silencing" voices in supporting Palestinians on Instagram and Facebook.

Meta\*, formerly the Facebook company which also owns Instagram, is being sued for censoring Palestinian content across its social media platforms. The lawsuit was brought forward on Tuesday by a former Meta engineer, Ferras Hamad, who is Palestinian-American.

Hamad [claims](#) he was fired by Meta for trying to help fix bugs causing the suppression of Palestinian Instagram posts. His case, brought forward in a California state court, accuses Meta of discrimination, wrongful termination and other wrongdoing over his firing.

Hamad first started working on the company's machine learning team in 2021. He has accused Facebook's parent company of a pattern of bias against Palestinians. After he was fired in February, Hamad said Meta deleted internal communications between workers about the deaths of their family members in Gaza. He also claimed the company conducted investigations into their employees' use of the Palestinian flag emoji.

According to the lawsuit, the company did not conduct similar investigations for employees posting Israeli or Ukrainian flag emojis.

Almost 200 Meta employees voiced similar concerns to Hamad's to the company's chief executive, Mark Zuckerberg, in an open letter earlier this year.

Hamad claims that in December, he noticed procedural irregularities in the handling of an SEV (site event) related to restrictions on content posted by Palestinian personalities, which prevented the post from appearing in searches and feeds. In one such instant, the suit alleges that Hamad found a short video posted by a Palestinian photojournalist was misclassified as pornographic even though it showed a destroyed building in Gaza.

Hamad said that the SEV was part of his job function after he requested to resolve the bug that seemed to be censoring Palestinian content. But a month after he voiced his concern a Meta representative told him he was the subject of an investigation and he filed an internal discrimination complaint in response. Days later, Hamad was fired.

At the beginning of this year, [Human Rights Watch](#) wrote a report in which they claimed that Meta's content moderation policies and systems had increasingly silenced voices supporting Palestine on their platforms, Instagram and Facebook.

The organization writes that their report "documents a pattern of undue removal and suppression of protected speech including peaceful expression in support of Palestine and public debate about Palestinian human rights."

The organization found six key patterns of censorship, with each recurring in at least 100 instances: "content removals, suspension or deletion of accounts, inability to engage with content, inability to follow or tag accounts, restrictions on the use of features such as Instagram/Facebook Live, and 'shadow banning.'"

They add that the report "found that the problem stems from flawed Meta policies and their inconsistent and erroneous implementation, overreliance on automated tools to moderate content, and undue government influence over content removals."

\*Meta is banned in the Russian Federation for extremist activities.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

The Zelensky Comedy Hour

Invitations were sent to about 160 capitals and organizations in total, with 107 responding to those invitations.

Switzerland is set to host a summit between June 15-16. The [purpose](#) of which is to build “broad international support” for Volodymyr Zelensky, according to a recent report. Ukraine will reportedly introduce “peace proposals” for its conflict with Russia during the summit, even though Moscow has not been invited to attend.

The summit marks Ukraine’s desperation as they enter their third year of a losing proxy war against Russia. To add insult to injury, US President Joe Biden is going to skip the peace summit organized by his Ukrainian counterpart in favor of a Democratic fundraiser in California where the Hollywood elite and former President Barack Obama will be in attendance, according to a report from [The Telegraph](#).

The report claims that Zelensky’s aides wrote a memo which was then distributed to officials and MPs encouraging them to put public pressure on Biden and Chinese leader Xi Jinping for not attending the summit. The memo questioned; “If they don’t attend, then what is their real interest?”

Zelensky also accused Russia of influencing China to disrupt the event.

But China maintained that they have an objective, third party stance on the conflict and added that it would be difficult for them to attend the “peace summit” if Russia is not invited.

“On peace talks, China’s position is fair and just. It does not target any third country, and of course, is not aimed at Switzerland’s hosting of this summit for peace,” said Mao Ning, a spokeswoman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

‘NATO Would Stand No Chance’ Against Russia-China Military Alliance – Analyst

The United States has historically worked to prevent an alliance between Russia and China, but the two global powers have joined together in an effort to guard themselves against Western aggression.

One year before his death Henry Kissenger, a consequential – and [highly controversial](#) – former US Secretary of State, saw the writing on the wall.

“The time is approaching to build on the strategic changes which have already been accomplished and to integrate them into a new structure towards achieving peace through negotiation,” [said](#) the top diplomat, urging an end to Ukraine’s Western-backed war against Russia.

Kissenger made the comments in an article entitled “How to Avoid Another World War” in the British magazine The Spectator, noting that Russia’s “thousands of nuclear weapons” make it “one of the world’s two largest nuclear powers.”

With characteristic braggadocio, the veteran strategist's remarks were [slammed](#) by the Ukrainian government and criticized by a fair number of Western liberals, by then fully convinced of the United States' duty to once again safeguard freedom and democracy. The West's apparent indifference towards the prospect of nuclear war and strategic incompetence in allowing Russia and China to join forces was criticized by former security analyst Dr. David Oualaalou, who discussed the latest developments in the Russo-Ukrainian conflict on Sputnik's The Critical Hour program Tuesday.

"Putin will not bluff on this, because this is what's going to be expected of the Russians, the Russian people, from their leader to defend the country by any means, as we are pushing more and more," said Oualaalou, noting that Moscow views the conflict as a matter of existential importance.

"The idea to me, the way I look at it, is [Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor] Orban does not want to have his country caught in the middle of this, being a member of NATO or not at this point," he added, characterizing the European leader as a voice of sanity on the issue.

"He's talking to his lawyers, the officers – they are looking for ways on how to opt out of this kind of involvement with NATO. Frankly, if I may use the term here, it's about time for Hungary to make a decision whether to leave NATO altogether."

Oualaalou noted that the increasing unpopularity of Western involvement in the ongoing proxy war is leading to a surge in popularity for the right-wing across Europe, with French politician Marine Le Pen rising in popularity while suggesting the country should leave NATO.

Kissenger, credited with setting the United States on a path towards global dominance in the 1970s, worked to ensure China and Russia remained divided during his time as US Secretary of State, pursuing an opening of relations with China to pull them closer to the US. But Western bellicosity has now functioned to create a strong partnership between the two countries, Oualaalou argued – forming an alliance that Western powers would not be able to overcome through military means.

"The strategic alliance between Russia and China ain't going to be about taking over countries, ain't going to be about missile-producing or whatever. It's going to be about ensuring justice and fairness on the global stage... [With] these two countries – Russia and China – joined by others, NATO would stand no chance. The US would stand no chance," he claimed.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Mirror Effects: Is US Reflecting Ukraine's Disregard for Democracy?

Is the Biden administration replicating Volodymyr Zelensky's repression of dissidents in the United States?

"If you lie down with dogs you get up with fleas," according to a famous English expression. The well-known proverb, thought to go back to the 16th century, is understood as an aphorism about the importance of the company one keeps. Associating with people of poor reputation, it is warned, presents the danger of picking up their poor habits, assumptions and behavior. The United States' foreign policy prerogatives have resulted in the country being allied with a number of questionable political figures, perhaps most notably Zelensky.

Whistleblower and former Ukrainian diplomat Andrii Telizhenko joined [Sputnik's Fault Lines program Tuesday](#) to discuss the Biden administration's partnership with such figures, responding to the news of former US Marine Corps intelligence officer and Sputnik contributor Scott Ritter [being prevented from traveling to Russia](#), reportedly on orders from the US State Department.

"I experienced it myself almost a couple of years ago," said Telizhenko in response to the apparent act of political persecution, which resulted in Ritter's passport being confiscated without due process. "I had a 24-hour notice before boarding the plane. I got an email from the US embassy in Kiev stating that my visa got pulled and that I'm under investigation and sanctions without any other information."

"So I understand how they feel and I wish them well," said the ex-diplomat. "The US is showing its real democracy face today [with] the trial against President Trump, the political trial, the political situation, basically, of trying to get a candidate off the ballot by putting him in prison even though that's going to be impossible to do."

The former president's recent prosecution by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg has raised eyebrows given that the charges brought against him are typically [defined](#) as misdemeanors rather than felonies, for which the statute of limitations had already elapsed. Officials had previously declined to pursue the charges given the presumed weakness of the case.

Critics allege the trial suggests a pattern of political persecution against Trump, who has upset establishment figures in both major political parties. Earlier this year it was revealed that former President Barack Obama's Central Intelligence Agency had [illegally spied on Trump](#) during his run for president in 2016. The real estate magnate was hounded during his time in the White House with claims of alleged collusion with Russian officials during the election, [claims which were eventually found to be baseless](#).

"We have US citizens who are boarding a flight to go to Russia [and] maybe they are one of the only few chances that the US has to maintain a type of contact and have peace with Russia," said Telizhenko of figures like Ritter, who has vocally opposed US support for Ukraine in its conflict with Moscow. "These guys are being pulled off the plane and [having] their passports taken away without any reason."

"This is what's happening today in America... That's why everybody's fed up with this American democracy around the globe, they don't want it anymore."

"They had a secret warrant on [Journalist Julian] Assange, too," noted host Jamarl Thomas. "Assange kept saying 'there's a warrant, there's a warrant.' And they were like, 'oh, he's just making it up.' No. He was right. There was a secret warrant."

It eventually emerged that former CIA director and ex-US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had drawn up plans to kidnap and kill the transparency activist, who has been effectively imprisoned for more than a decade fearing US reprisal for publishing leaked government documents.

The Ukrainian government has similarly been criticized for its human rights record in recent years, with host Melik Abdul noting viral videos of [Ukrainian citizens being forcefully apprehended](#) by conscription officers. Recent polling reveals only a minority of fighting-age Ukrainians are willing to join the country's armed forces, with increasing numbers of citizens favoring a negotiated settlement to the country's conflict with Russia.

"There's thousands of videos out there," said Telizhenko. "Some of these family members are fighting, there's women on the streets, fighting off these military police officers [that] were dragging men off the street and just regular people are helping them because they understand that this is chaos what's happened."

"Because the people didn't want war, people wanted peace – people wanted Zelensky to bring peace and he promised that," said the whistleblower, who claimed Zelensky was "bought off" by Western interests who favored military conflict with Russia. Observers have also [noted](#) Ukraine's "neo-Nazi problem," suggesting Zelensky may feel pressured against pursuing talks with Russia by extremist paramilitaries who forced former President Viktor Yanukovich out of power.

Such groups have vocally opposed negotiations with Moscow even though Zelensky won the presidency on a promise to diffuse tensions by implementing the so-called Minsk agreements. Zelensky has been condemned for shuttering independent media and banning opposition parties in Ukraine, even as the Biden administration frequently casts the country's war with Russia as a battle of "democracy versus authoritarianism." As critics allege the US government is taking [an increasingly authoritarian turn](#), observers may wonder whether the US is replicating the tactics of countries such as Ukraine, or if the [measures](#) it [imposes](#) on [others](#) in its imperial conquests are simply finding their way home.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

As Politicians Seek War, Will the People Pull West Back From the Brink?

Powerful interests within Western governments have perpetually stoked conflict with Russia, notes one analyst, but skepticism towards war is widespread among the American and European public.

Public opinion in the West over which country played the primary role in defeating Nazism has [shifted](#) dramatically over the decades. In 1945, a survey of the French public found 57% believed the Soviet Union contributed the most towards the effort. By 2004 only 20% believed this, with 58% of French people now saying the United States deserved the most credit for Hitler's defeat.

One often overlooked aspect of the conflict, however, is the extent to which the American public initially opposed the country's entry into World War II. A poll taken in 1939 characterized US sentiment, revealing that only 16% of Americans favored sending the country's Army and Navy to help Europe fight Germany.

Some figures, including a few prominent North American industrialists like Henry Ford and [other well-known personalities](#), expressed sympathy towards the fascist cause. Others, with the horrors of World War I still fresh in mind, were simply skeptical of another bloody European conflict. Whatever the motivation, anti-war sentiment has played an important historical role in the American psyche, with luminaries like Eugene V. Debs, Smedley Butler and Martin Luther King Jr. all criticizing the militarist impulse.

In 2024, anti-war sentiment is perhaps once again the default position of most Americans amid widespread critique of decades-long engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan. But, as the Western

political establishment signals repeated willingness to escalate tensions with a nuclear-armed Russia, will the objections of the majority of Americans be drowned out amid another march towards conflict?

Serbian-American journalist Nebojsa Malic joined [Sputnik's The Final Countdown program Wednesday](#) to discuss the issue as host Angie Wong asked whether recently [leaked](#) NATO war plans against Russia represent the typical contingencies devised by the alliance or evidence of a genuine descent towards world war.

"It could be a little bit of both," said the columnist, who has written for RT and Antiwar.com. "The fact that it was leaked to the press is definitely a signal, and it's definitely something coming out of the kitchen of people who are obsessed with narratives, as the British and US government are."

"Officially they have to say, 'oh, yeah, we'll defend every inch.' But from a purely military perspective, they're not going to put troops in the Baltics," he claimed. "The Baltics are a speed bump. Their job is to buy NATO 15 minutes"

"I think a lot of this is just sort of a demonstration for the media, but that part I'm not sure about is whether it's meant to reassure the European allies of the US ahead of the European Parliament elections or to send some kind of message to the Russians, because I don't think the Russians are getting the message in that case that the West has intended them to."

Malic suggested the leak is another example of the West's aggressive posture towards Russia, a dynamic he says is typically ignored in Western media. The journalist noted Russia sent the US and NATO a proposal in December 2021, some three months before launching its special military operation in the Donbass, seeking to have its minimum security needs met.

Historically the West failed to include Russia in the European security architecture that emerged after the end of the Cold War – a fact many critics say helped lead to the current conflict with Ukraine. Western officials have confirmed [Russian President Vladimir Putin asked to join NATO](#), but was rebuffed. The military alliance began a steady expansion eastward in the late 1990s, violating [US assurances to former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev](#) that "NATO would not move one inch to the East" after incorporating a newly-reunified Germany.

"This gets overlooked because a lot of people tend to believe that everything started on February 21st [2022]," Malic stressed. "Even Biden himself mentioned the other day in a rambling interview with Time magazine that he had apparently told Putin in Switzerland during their meeting that instead of the 'Finlandization' of NATO, he's going to seek the 'NATO-ization' of Finland."

"If he really did say that at the summit then we need to revise our timelines here and propose that maybe the conditions for a clash between the US and Russia were initiated at that meeting," he suggested.

The Biden administration's bellicosity notwithstanding, evidence suggests the American public is growing weary of the Ukraine conflict, with [about half](#) of people polled saying the country has spent too much money supporting Kiev's war effort. Many European politicians appear to share Washington's fixation on the proxy war, however, with NATO leaders recently making plans to continue backing Ukraine in the event of Donald Trump's return to the White House. But Europe's militaries would struggle in the absence of American assistance, Malic claimed.

"You basically have three militaries that might actually independently operate," said the columnist, who questioned the potency of the German Bundeswehr and French armed forces while claiming "the Turks... don't want any part of this."

"The Poles have a massive military in terms of numbers, but they've also been rumored to have been sending them piecemeal into Ukraine as sort of volunteers and bringing them back in coffins," he added. "It doesn't seem like the European Union, the European part of NATO, has much of a force and I think the US did that by design. The idea was always with these militaries to be more adjunct and sort of prevent them from developing independently, because some kind of independent Europe was Washington's worst nightmare in terms of maintaining its global hegemony."

Evidence suggests the European people share much of Americans' skepticism towards war on Russia, with rightwing French politician Marine Le Pen surging in popularity while [pledging](#) to remove the country from NATO.

In Germany, the rightwing party Alternative fur Deutschland has also risen in the polls while questioning Berlin's foreign policy, causing alarm among establishment German lawmakers. Divisions persist in the country, which historically [claims](#) a "special relationship" with Moscow and significant cultural links given the history of East Germany.

For now, Washington remains the most influential outside force in German politics, but will the cratering of the country's economy under sanctions on Russian energy once again drive it closer to Moscow's camp? If industrial decline does not force a change in foreign policy, the prospect of the right's return to power just might do so in a country still haunted by its 20th-century history.

In any case, pulling the Western world back from the brink of conflict may depend on the efforts of an engaged citizenry who refuse to fight a catastrophic nuclear war.

Is US hegemony a paper tiger?

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

The image of NATO – and the United States' global dominance, by extension – has taken a beating as Moscow appears to succeed in achieving goals of the special operation. However, economist Radhika Desai says US hegemony has not fallen, but that it never truly existed. The author made the claim on Sputnik's The Critical Hour program.

"It's one thing to say that the West should listen to Presidents Xi and Putin, but I would suggest to you that the West has long lost the ability to do so," said Dr. Desai. "If you basically take the position that you do not wish to convert your economy into an open playground for our corporations, and if you don't do so, then we will consider you an autocrat, a dictator, a violator of our rules-based international order."

Countries that have attempted to operate their economies outside of the control of the Western-led global economic order, such as Bashar al-Assad's Syria and Muammar Gaddafi's Libya, have repeatedly become targets of US regime change operations.

"[US] hegemony has already ended," said Desai. "My argument has always been in various books that I have argued, including my book Geopolitical Economy, it's never existed. What you've seen since the end of the Second World War, and even earlier in the 20th century, is a series of attempts on the part of the United States to impose its weight on the rest of the world."

"But none of these attempts have ever succeeded," she claimed. "We portray the Bretton Woods system as a US-created entity. When we do that, we forget that the United States actually wanted a far more free market world than what it got in 1945. By free market, I mean a world open to US corporations. It failed to get this... And the United States military has actually not won a single war."

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

"NATO would stand no chance" against Russia-China military alliance – analyst

The West's apparent indifference towards the prospect of nuclear war and strategic incompetence in allowing Russia and China to join forces was criticized by international geopolitical consultant Dr. David Oualaalou, who discussed the latest developments in Russia's special operation on Sputnik's The Critical Hour program.

"Putin will not bluff on this, because this is what's going to be expected of the Russian people from their leader, to defend the country by any means, as we are pushing more and more," said Oualaalou, noting that Moscow views the conflict as a matter of existential importance.

Oualaalou noted that the increasing unpopularity of Western involvement in the ongoing proxy war is leading to a surge in popularity for the right-wing across Europe, with French politician Marine Le Pen rising in popularity while suggesting the country should leave NATO.

Western bellicosity has now functioned to create a strong partnership between the two countries, Oualaalou argued – potentially forming an alliance that Western powers would not be able to overcome through military means.

"The strategic alliance between Russia and China ain't going to be about taking over countries, ain't going to be about missile-producing or whatever. It's going to be about ensuring justice and fairness on the global stage... [With] these two countries – Russia and China – joined by others, NATO would stand no chance. The US would stand no chance," he claimed.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Mirror effects: is US reflecting Ukraine's disregard for democracy?

“We have US citizens who are boarding a flight to go to Russia [and] maybe they are one of the only few chances that the US has to maintain a type of contact and have peace with Russia,” said former Ukrainian diplomat Andrii Telizhenko of figures like Ritter, who has vocally opposed US support for Ukraine in its conflict with Moscow. “These guys are being pulled off the plane and [having] their passports taken away without any reason.”

The United States’ foreign policy prerogatives have resulted in the country being allied with a number of questionable political figures, including Volodymyr Zelensky.

Telizhenko joined Sputnik’s Fault Lines program to discuss the Biden administration’s partnership with the controversial figure, also responding to the news of former US Marine Corps intelligence officer Scott Ritter being prevented from traveling to Russia, reportedly on orders from the US State Department.

“I experienced it myself almost a couple of years ago,” said Telizhenko in response to the apparent act of political persecution, which resulted in Ritter’s passport being confiscated. “I had a 24-hour notice before boarding the plane. I got an email from the US embassy in Kiev stating that my visa got pulled and that I’m under investigation and sanctions without any other information.”

The Ukrainian government has similarly been criticized for its human rights record in recent years, with host Melik Abdul noting viral videos of Ukrainian citizens being forcefully apprehended by conscription officers. Recent polling reveals only a minority of fighting-age Ukrainians are willing to join the country’s armed forces, with increasing numbers of citizens favoring a negotiated settlement to the country’s conflict with Russia.

“People wanted Zelensky to bring peace and he promised that,” said the whistleblower, who claimed Zelensky was “bought off” by Western interests who favored military conflict with Russia. Observers have also noted Ukraine’s “neo-Nazi problem,” suggesting Zelensky may feel pressured against pursuing talks with Russia by extremist paramilitaries who forced former President Viktor Yanukovich out of power.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

As politicians seek war, will the people pull West back from the brink?

Serbian-American journalist Nebojsa Malic joined Sputnik’s The Final Countdown program to discuss the prospect of conflict with a nuclear-armed Russia as host Angie Wong asked whether leaked NATO war plans represent the typical contingencies devised by the alliance or evidence of a genuine descent towards world war.

"It could be a little bit of both," said the columnist. "The fact that it was leaked to the press is definitely a signal, and it's definitely something coming out of the kitchen of people who are obsessed with narratives, as the British and US government are."

"I think a lot of this is just sort of a demonstration for the media, but that part I'm not sure about is whether it's meant to reassure the European allies of the US ahead of the European Parliament elections or to send some kind of message to the Russians, because I don't think the Russians are getting the message in that case that the West has intended them to."

Malic suggested the leak is another example of the West's aggressive posture towards Russia, a dynamic he says is typically ignored in Western media. The journalist noted Russia sent the US and NATO a proposal in December 2021, some three months before launching its special military operation in the Donbass, seeking to have its minimum security needs met.

"A lot of people tend to believe that everything started on February 21st [2022]," said Malic. "Even Biden himself mentioned the other day in a rambling interview with Time magazine that he had apparently told Putin in Switzerland during their meeting that instead of the 'Finlandization' of NATO, he's going to seek the 'NATO-ization' of Finland."

"If he really did say that at the summit then we need to revise our timelines here and propose that maybe the conditions for a clash between the US and Russia were initiated at that meeting," he suggested.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Spacex Launches Fourth Flight Test of Starship Megarocket

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, Texas, June 6 (Sputnik) - Elon Musk's company SpaceX launched on Thursday morning its fourth Starship megarocket from Starbase in Texas, a Sputnik correspondent reported.

Despite cloudy weather, the fourth Starship took off at about 8:50 EST.

The primary goal is to demonstrate a landing burn and a soft splashdown in the Gulf of Mexico with the Super Heavy booster and at the same time, achieving a controlled entry of the Starship. During the reentry, the Starship should also demonstrate its ability to go through the most extreme heating of reentry, when the temperatures peak at 1,430° Celsius, while the ship is plunging into the atmosphere at over 20 times the speed of sound.

Up to now, the SpaceX company has conducted three test flights. The first failed test in April 2023 that destroyed SpaceX's launch pad as well as the rocket. The second flight was in November of the same year that also failed to reach space. The third test flight launched on March 18 2024 reached space for the first time before the vehicle and its Super Heavy booster were lost prior to reaching their final splashdown targets.

In 2021, NASA signed with SpaceX a \$2.9 billion agreement to carry astronauts to lunar orbit and back. NASA targets September 2025 for Artemis II, the first crewed Artemis mission around

the Moon, and September 2026 for Artemis III, to land the first astronauts near the lunar South Pole.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

US Imports From Russia Decreased to \$297.5Mln in April – Census Bureau

WASHINGTON, June 6 (Sputnik) – The United States imported \$297.5 million worth of goods from Russia in April, down from \$427 million in March, according to US Census Bureau data published on Thursday.

US exports to Russia also shrank to \$33.9 million in April from \$43.7 million in March.

The nation's trade deficit with Russia totaled \$1.1 billion for the first four months of this year, according to the data.

US-Russia trade ties have shrunk in recent years due to sanctions and export controls imposed on Moscow. Bilateral trade plummeted from \$38.2 billion in 2013 to \$5.2 billion in 2023, the US Trade Representative's Office said in a report in March.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

US Conducts Second Minuteman III ICBM Test in A Week - Vandenberg Space Force Base

WASHINGTON, June 6 (Sputnik) - The United States launched a Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile on Thursday, marking the second such test in a week, the Vandenberg Space Force Base said.

"An unarmed Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missile launches during an operational test at 1:46 a.m. Pacific Time 6 June, 2024, at Vandenberg Space Force Base, Calif. ICBM test launches demonstrate that the U.S. ICBM fleet is ready, reliable and effective in leveraging dominance in an era of strategic competition," the statement said.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Biden Says US Weapons Will Not Be Used to Strike Moscow, Kremlin

WASHINGTON, June 6 (Sputnik) - The United States has not authorized Ukraine to strike Moscow or the Kremlin with US-supplied weapons, President Joe Biden told ABC.

"They're authorized to be used in proximity to the border when they're being used on the other side of the border to attack specific targets in Ukraine," Biden said in an interview. "We're not authorizing strikes 200 miles into Russia and we're not authorizing strikes on Moscow, on the Kremlin."

Biden in the interview once again labeled Putin a "dictator."

During a meeting with the heads of the world's leading news agencies on the sidelines of the

St. Petersburg International Economic Forum on Wednesday, Putin said that he had expected attacks from Biden in response to him saying in February that he favors the incumbent US president over presumptive Republican nominee Donald Trump. Putin once again called Biden a predictable, "old-school politician."

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Biden's New Restrictions on Southern Border Won't Make 'Measurable' Impact -Ex-US Official

EL PASO, June 6 (Sputnik) - President Joe Biden's new measures to limit illegal entries on the US southern border will not have a meaningful on the border crisis and migrants will continue to find loopholes to exploit the system, former acting US Customs and Border Protection Deputy Commissioner Ronald Vitiello told Sputnik.

"It's way too little, too late," Vitiello said on Wednesday. "It doesn't seem to me that it gets to the root cause of the problem. I don't think it's going to make a measurable difference to the frontline."

On Tuesday, Biden took executive action barring migrants who illegally cross the US southern border from claiming asylum in the United States. The new restrictions went into effect on Wednesday.

The suspension will be removed when daily illegal entries on the US southern border hit or fall below 1,500 for seven-consecutive days, but the suspension will snap back if daily illegal entries on the US southern border exceed 2,500 illegal crossings for seven straight days, according to the White House.

The 2,500 threshold in place under the new system still allows for nearly a million migrants to cross the US southern border illegally each year, which is still a lot more compared to previous years under other US presidents, Vitiello noted.

"There's no way those people [migrants] are going to be processed in a timely manner, kept safe, put in the system, and then even released or sent back to Mexico in a safe and coherent way," Vitiello said.

Biden's new border policy includes humanitarian exceptions for unaccompanied children and victims of trafficking, among others, which Vitiello expects will be exploited by human smugglers.

Vitiello pointed out that some 30,000 migrants from Nicaragua, Cuba, Venezuela, and Haiti are entering the United States through Biden's parole system, but it's not properly reflected in recent federal data tracking the number of migrants coming over the southern border.

"Fundamentally, this plan does not take people out of the pipeline," Vitiello said regarding the parole system. "The whole parole thing minimizes the reported encounter numbers...Parole is supposed to be an individualized determination set aside for people who have a humanitarian need...It's not for if you live in Cuba or Haiti or Venezuela, just sign up ahead of time and we'll let you in on parole status. That's a fundamental abuse of their authority."

The Texas Military Department (TMD) in response to Sputnik's request for comment on the matter shared no particular opinion on Biden's new border policy but said it would continue to take action to deter illegal migrants on the Texas-Mexico border.

"The Texas National Guard remains committed to preventing, deterring, and interdicting transnational criminal activity, illegal immigration, and human trafficking between ports of entry," a TMD spokesperson said.

Illegal migration on the US southern border has gone through three consecutive record-breaking years since Biden took over the White House in January 2021, totaling nearly 8 million illegal encounters during that period, according to publicly available US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) data.

Since October 2023, an estimated 1.5 million migrants have been apprehended for illegally crossing into the United States on the southern border, CBP data shows.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Biden Congratulates India's Modi on Election Victory - White House

WASHINGTON, June 6 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden spoke by telephone with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and congratulated him and the National Democratic Alliance on their victory in India's general election, the White House said.

"President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. spoke today with Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India to congratulate him and the National Democratic Alliance on their historic victory in India's general election," the White House said in a statement on Wednesday.

The two officials emphasized their commitment to deepening the US-India Comprehensive and Global Strategic Partnership and advancing their shared vision of a free, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific region, the statement said.

"The two leaders also discussed National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan's upcoming travel to New Delhi to engage the new government on shared US-India priorities, including the trusted, strategic technology partnership," the statement added.

Earlier on Wednesday, the Indian Election Commission announced the final election results of the vote. The National Democratic Alliance won 292 out of 543 seats in the lower house of parliament, effectively securing itself a legislative majority. Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) received 240 seats, while the main opposition Indian National Congress party received 99 seats.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Skunk Works Team Uses AI to Conduct Successful Flight Intercepts - Lockheed Martin

WASHINGTON, June 6 (Sputnik) - Lockheed Martin's Skunk Works has cooperated with scientists at the University of Iowa to use artificial intelligence (AI) to conduct successful flight intercepts, the US aerospace giant said in a press release.

"Lockheed Martin Skunk Works partnered with the University of Iowa's Operator Performance Laboratory (OPL) to demonstrate the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in air-to-air intercept scenarios," the release said on Wednesday.

The successful flights were described as a significant milestone for Skunk Works' Tactical AI team, the release said.

"AI directly flew and conducted tactical exercises with a full-scale, live aircraft – one of OPL's L-29 Delfin jets – using heading, speed and altitude commands. The team executed simulated-to-real transfer test objectives against a virtual adversary in offensive and defensive risk postures," the release added.

Eight test cases were conducted per flight to exercise the AI agent in a variety of situations, from standard head-to-head fights to off-aspect encounters, missile support and missile defeat scenarios and the tests revealed clean simulation-to-real transfer of learned behaviors and that the AI agent appeared intentional and decisive in its actions, according to the release.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Nine Members of Wisconsin Prison Staff Arrested in Connection to Inmate Deaths - Sheriff

WASHINGTON, June 6 (Sputnik) - Nine members of Waupun correctional institution in the US state of Wisconsin, including the warden, have been arrested by local law enforcement in connection to the deaths of two prisoners, Dodge County Sheriff Dale Schmidt said during a press conference.

"Nine individuals are being charged in connection to decedent three and decedent four," Schmidt said on Wednesday.

Schmidt said the nine individuals are facing charges of misconduct and abuse.

A police investigation found that the prison staff showed a "blatant disregard" for the safety of the prisoners, Schmidt said, adding that there must be accountability for the actions and inaction of state employees.

During the press conference, Schmidt highlighted that there have been four prison deaths between June 2023 and February 2024.

The prison deaths the prison employees are being charged for include a prisoner who died from a stroke after suffering multiple medical episodes with no medical assistance provided. He had been dead in his cell for over 12 hours until prison staff located him the next morning, police said.

Another prisoner was pronounced dead on February 22 due to maltreatment by staff, which is being treated as a homicide by authorities. The prisoner had his water shutoff for a significant period of time, and prison staff at one point failed to feed him nine out of 12 meals over a four day period, according to police.

The other inmate deaths that are not part of the indictments includes a prisoner who died from suicide following inadequate distribution of all medications by the prison staff, and another prisoner who died from an apparent drug overdose from use of fentanyl, Schmidt said.

There's a great concern over the quantity and frequency of contraband being able to be smuggled into the Waupun prison, Schmidt added.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is**

**on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

US Joint Domain Command Program Shifts to Limited Kill Chain Focus - Expert

WASHINGTON, June 6 (Sputnik) - The US military is shifting from the dream of a super comprehensive Joint All Domain Command and Control (JADC2) communications targeting net to smaller, less ambitious ones based on "bottom-up" and "kill-chain" principles, Hudson Institute Center for Defense Concepts and Technology Director Bryan Clark said during the online C4ISRNET conference.

"The [Defense] Department started out with this idea of JADC2 being all sensors, all shooters and all commanders being able to interact with each other and being able to combine into kill chains almost at will," Clark said on Wednesday. "We have come up with a much more bottom up approach [focusing on the priorities] that are most important ..., operational problems. That has been able to yield some real benefits."

Clark tacitly admitted that despite the investment of billions of dollars appropriated by Congress, the program had not yielded major results so far in its first two years largely because the original goals were so wide-ranging and proved unrealistic.

"We are going to see more success as JADC2 goes forward than we have in the first couple of years [of the program]," he said. The original program was "a little bit too ambitious for what the technology ... and acquisition process can achieve," Clark said.

The program to integrate communications, command and control more seamlessly was increasingly turning to off-the-shelf commercial technology that was more adaptive and could much more easily interface with a host of different US and allied systems, Clark added.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Arizona National Guard Says Can't Meet Kiev's Plea for More F-16 Training, Space Limited

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - An Arizona National Guard spokesperson told Sputnik on Wednesday that its 162nd Wing unit cannot accommodate Ukraine's request to train more of its pilots on F-16 fighter jets because training availability is scarce and multiple other countries have spots reserved throughout the year.

Earlier in the day, Politico reported that Ukraine has been pressuring the United States and its European partners to step up F-16 training for Ukrainian pilots.

"We are limited based on instructor student ratio and aircraft availability," the spokesperson said when asked about Ukraine's request. "On top of the Ukrainian students, there are multiple other countries that have reserved training throughout the year."

Last month, several Ukrainian pilots from a group of 12 completed training on F-16 fighter jets at Morris Air National Guard Base in Arizona, which is a premier F-16 fighter pilot training school. More are expected to complete their training through the summer.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

## SPUTNIK TOP STORIES OF THE DAY

WASHINGTON, June 6 (Sputnik) -

### PUTIN MEETING WITH INTERNATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES

- \* Russia continues to supply gas to Europe via Ukraine, although only one out of two pipelines is currently operational, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday.
- \* Russia and China continue their defense industry cooperation, and Moscow has something to offer Beijing, Putin said.
- \* Foreign investors, including Arab sovereign funds, have shown interest in the North-South international transport corridor, with the project promising to be very profitable, Putin said.
- \* The United States provoked an unconstitutional takeover in Ukraine and therefore bears equal responsibility for what is happening there at the moment, Putin said.
- \* Germany's missile supplies to Ukraine will completely destroy its relations with Russia, Putin said.
- \* The well-being of Europeans is at risk due to the policies of some Western countries, Putin said.
- \* Russia does not threaten anyone, especially not the leaders of other countries, as to do so would be "bad manners," Putin said.
- \* The prosecution of former President Donald Trump is done by the use of the US judicial system for internal political struggles, Putin said.

### CONFLICT IN UKRAINE

- \* Russia's army group West has taken better positions in the past 24 hours while the Ukrainian military has lost up to 545 soldiers, the Russian Defense Ministry said on Wednesday.
- \* A US Defense Department spokesperson told Sputnik that the United States' new guidance allowing Ukraine to use US-supplied weapons for limited strikes inside Russia has just gone into effect, but declined to disclose whether such strikes have already happened.
- \* At least four people have suffered injuries after a conflict between two groups of foreign mercenaries fighting for Ukraine resulted in shootout in Kherson, a pro-Russian underground network told Sputnik.
- \* The French mission to the United Nations has requested a UN Security Council meeting on humanitarian issues pertaining to Ukraine to be held on Friday, a Security Council source told Sputnik.

### ST. PETERSBURG ECONOMIC FORUM

- \* President Vladimir Putin will have an informative conversation with the heads of major international news agencies at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) on Wednesday, and representatives of unfriendly countries will participate, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.
- \* Sierra Leone is conducting negotiations with Russia's RUSAL aluminium company and plans

to hold talks with the Alrosa diamond mining company at the SPIEF, Julius Mattai, the minister of mines and mineral resources of the African country, told Sputnik.

#### SLOVAK PRIME MINISTER FICO

\* Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico said on Wednesday that he does not feel any hatred toward the person who tried to assassinate him, and plans to return to work in late June or early July.

\* Fico said that he does not believe that a lone madman attacked him, calling the attacker an opposition activist.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Wall Street Hits Record Highs As Cooling US Jobs Data Revive Rate Cut Bets

NEW YORK, June 5 (Sputnik) - Stocks on Wall Street hit record highs Wednesday as softening US labor data revived hopes that the Federal Reserve will be inclined to cut interest rates faster than the 2025 timeline suggested by some officials at the central bank.

The Fed wants to reduce rates that it raised to two-decade highs almost a year ago. But it is wary of doing so amid stronger-than-expected inflation that has been supported by heady wage and spending growth. Data this week indicated that the US payrolls report for May due on Friday could be softer than thought.

That prompted speculators across markets to push down Treasury yields, that are a bet on higher rates, and send prices of oil to stocks rallying — in anticipation of a rate cut by September.

The S&P 500 Index, which tracks stocks of the top 500 US companies, closed at an all-time high of 5,355, gaining 63 points, or 1.2%.

“We see the S&P 500 reaching 5,500 by year-end amid Fed rate cuts, robust profit growth, and the secular growth trend brought by artificial intelligence,” Solita Marcelli, chief investment officer at UBS Global Wealth Management, said in a note shared with the firm’s clients.

The technology-heavy Nasdaq Composite Index, which comprises stocks such as Amazon, Apple, Netflix and Google, also settled at a record high of 17,186, up nearly 330 points, or 2%, on the day.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average, the broadest indicator for US equity markets, surged to a session high of 38,844 before finishing at 38,807, up 96 points, or 0.3%, on the day.

Treasury yields tumbled as rate-cut bets were boosted by data showing the US economy created fewer-than-expected private sector jobs in May, with just 152,000 workers hired during the month, down from 188,000 in April, and missing economists estimates of 173,000.

The private sector jobs numbers came a day after a separate report showed job openings at three-year lows in April.

About 65% of rate cut watchers now expect the Fed to institute a cut by September, according to the FedWatch Tool. Just a few weeks ago, that number was closer to 50%.

The slew of jobs data indicating a cooling of the labor market comes just ahead of the all-important US nonfarm payrolls report for May due on Friday.

Inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, hit a four-decade high in the aftermath of the 2020 coronavirus breakout, growing as much as 9.1% a year by June 2022.

The Fed, responding to runaway price growth, hiked interest rates 11 times since March 2022.

The current range for rates, at between 5.25% and 5.5%, are at their highest since 2002. They compare with the pre-pandemic range of between zero and 0.25%.

The Fed has an opportunity to revise this at the conclusion of its next policy meeting on June 12. Should it pass on that, it has four more opportunities to make a change before the end of the year: July 31, September 18, November 7 and December 18.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Georgia Appeals Court Pauses Trump's 2020 Election Case to Consider Disqualifying Willis

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - The Georgia Court of Appeals on Wednesday paused the Superior Court of Fulton County's proceedings in Former President Donald Trump's 2020 election interference case until it rules on an effort to disqualify the prosecutor, District Attorney Fani Willis.

"The proceedings below in the Superior Court of Fulton County are hereby stayed pending the outcome of these appeals," the Court of Appeals said in an order on Wednesday.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

US Officials Praise Long-Delayed First Crewed Launch of Boeing Starliner to ISS - NASA

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - Top US space officials celebrated the first successful crewed launch of the years-delayed and more than \$1.5 billion over-budget Boeing Starliner on a mission to the International Space Station (ISS) at a NASA press conference on Wednesday. "This is a special moment," NASA Administrator Bill Nelson, a former US senator and astronaut, said. "It is one of the greatest moments in history."

NASA Commercial Crew Program Manager Steve Stich said that the astronauts had enjoyed a trouble-free ascent into orbit, despite a continuing small helium leak that had been detected on previous aborted countdowns.

"It was a very smooth ride. ... The helium leak was right where we left it ... [and was] half of what it was on the May 6 attempt. ... [It is] very manageable, Stich said.

The Starliner launched at 10:52 am Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on Wednesday on an Atlas 5 booster of the same design that was used to put the first US astronaut Alan Shepard in his sub-orbital flight back in 1961.

It carried veteran US Navy officers and astronauts Barry "Butch" Gilmore and Sunita "Suni" Williams, and they are scheduled to dock at the ISS at around 12:15 pm EDT on Thursday.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Russia Seeks UNSC Meeting on West's Green Light for Kiev's Strikes on Russia - UN Mission

UNITED NATIONS, June 5 (Sputnik) - Russia has asked for a meeting of the UN Security Council to be held on June 14 to discuss the West's green light for Kiev to use weapons they supplied in strikes on Russian territory, the Russian Mission to the UN said on Wednesday.

"Russia requested a meeting of the UN Security Council on June 14 due to the fact that Western countries gave Kiev the 'green light' to use the weapons they supply on the territory of the Russian Federation," the Russian Mission to the UN posted on its Telegram website.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Putin Says Pentagon or UK Behind Strikes on Russian Targets

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia, June 5 (Sputnik) – Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that it is either the United States or the United Kingdom behind strikes on Russian targets, depending on what kind of weapon is used in an attack.

"When a flight task is being formed it can practically be implemented only by those who supply these weapons. If it is an ATACMS [missile], then it is done by the Pentagon, if it is a Storm Shadow, then it is done by the British," Putin told foreign reporters on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) taking place on June 5-8.

The Ukrainian military can take part in the selection of targets, but the final say still lies with the suppliers of weapons, Putin added.

"They [Ukrainians] can say which target is of priority and necessary for them, but they do not decide whether to strike that target or not," Putin said.

Putin also pointed out that such actions by unfriendly countries are a threat to the international security system.

"Such actions will completely destroy international relations and undermine international security. In general, this is the path to very serious problems," Putin noted.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### US Seeks More Dialogue, Cooperation With China's Space Program - NASA Chief Nelson

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - The United States would welcome increased dialogue and cooperation with China in space, NASA administrator Bill Nelson told a press conference at Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida on Wednesday.

"Yes, we need to cooperate on things," Nelson said. "There are plenty of ... opportunities for deconfliction and cooperation."

The United States and China had already cooperated on issues of deconfliction so that their

space probes would not interfere with each other on or around Mars, Nelson said. He also congratulated Beijing on the success of its Chang'e-6 unmanned mission that had successfully landed on the far side of the Moon and retrieved samples.

"My congratulations to the Chinese space program. They have a very good space program," the NASA chief said.

Chang'e-6 is now making its return journey back to Earth, China's national space agency announced on Tuesday. The probe is carrying lunar rock samples extracted from the Moon's surface.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Western Instructors Suffer Losses in Ukraine, West Prefers to Hush This Up - Putin

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia, June 5 (Sputnik) - Western instructors are suffering losses in Ukraine, but the West prefers to keep silent about it, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday.

On Wednesday, Putin is meeting with the heads of major international news agencies, including representatives of unfriendly countries on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

"In terms of the presence of advisers and instructors, there is nothing new here - they are present on the territory of Ukraine," Putin stated. "And, unfortunately for them, they are suffering losses. I know this for sure, this is not done on purpose, but losses do occur during combat operations. However, in European countries and in the United States they prefer to hush this up."

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Western Nations Should Integrate Into Chinese Economy If Want to Be Successful - Putin

ST. PETERSBURG, June 5 (Sputnik) - Western countries need to integrate into the economic processes related to China in order to be successful, instead of interfering with them, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday.

On Wednesday, Putin is holding a conversation with the heads of major international news agencies, including representatives of unfriendly countries on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

"In my opinion, in order to be successful themselves, they should integrate into these [economic] processes, and not try to interfere with them," Putin said.

Putin stated that China's economy is very reliable and becoming increasingly high-tech, and attempts by the United States and some European countries to slow it down are wrong.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Russian-Chinese Relations Not Situational in Nature, Based on National Interests – Putin

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia, June 5 (Sputnik) - Bilateral relations between Russia and China are not situational in nature and based on deep, mutual interests, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday.

"As for bilateral relations [between China and Russia], I would like to draw your attention to the fact that they are not situational in nature. They are based on deep, mutual interests," Putin told foreign reporters on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF).

Putin noted that over the 15 years that China has been Russia's main trading partner, Moscow and Beijing have built their relations based on mutual interests, and not on opportunistic political world events.

During his communication with international journalists, Putin also discussed the prospects for developing Russian-Chinese high-tech relations, including aircraft manufacturing and artificial intelligence.

"We also have good prospects in the field of high technologies," Putin said. "I mean aircraft manufacturing, I mean artificial intelligence."

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Russia-China Cooperation Deterrent in International Arena - Putin

ST. PETERSBURG, June 5 (Sputnik) - The cooperation between Russia and China in the international arena is a deterrent factor and an element of stability, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday.

On Wednesday, Putin is holding a conversation with the heads of major international news agencies, including representatives of unfriendly countries on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

"Our cooperation in the international arena is a deterrent and an element of stability," Putin said, adding that in addition to economic issues, the work is underway on security and a number of other areas.

Putin pointed out that bilateral trade exceeds the expectations.

"According to Chinese statistics, it is \$240 billion, according to ours - a little less, about 230 [billion dollars]," he said. "However, the point is not even in the volume of trade, it is about diversifying it. And quite successfully."

Putin said that it concerns not only hydrocarbons and energy, although Russia supplies oil, gas, coal, and electricity to China.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

## Biden Taps Envoy to NATO Smith to Replace Nuland as Under Secretary of State – White House

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) – US President Joe Biden has nominated US Permanent Representative to NATO Julianne Smith to become the next Under Secretary of State after Victoria Nuland departed the State Department in March, the White House said in a press release on Wednesday.

“Today, President Joe Biden announced his intent to nominate the following individuals to serve as key leaders in his administration: Julie Smith, Nominee to be Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs,” the press release said.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

## Russia Has Something to Offer China in Defense Industry Cooperation - Putin

ST. PETERSBURG, June 5 (Sputnik) - Russia and China continue their defense industry cooperation, and Moscow has something to offer Beijing, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday.

On Wednesday, Putin is holding a conversation with the heads of major international news agencies, including representatives of unfriendly countries on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF).

"We are working on military-technical cooperation. We have something to offer our Chinese friends here," Putin said. "And our Chinese friends are interested in working together in this area."

Putin also said that Russia and China are conducting and will continue to conduct joint exercises, including military ones.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

## Development of Clean Energy Vehicles 'Very Positive Trend' - UN Spokesperson

UNITED NATIONS, June 5 (Sputnik) - The development of clean energy vehicles in China and in other states represents a "very positive trend," United Nations spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said on Wednesday.

"The development of clean energy vehicles, whether in China or in other countries, is a very positive trend," Dujarric said during a press briefing.

Dujarric made the statement in response to a request for comment regarding the claim that China is leading the electric cars market.

The UN spokesperson said it is important for the major producers of such vehicles to come to an agreement, either bilateral or otherwise, to ensure that a large number of vehicles is available to the market and get carbon burning fossil fuel vehicles off the road.

The market share of electric cars has reportedly reached 45% in China, which shares 64% of the world's market share, Dujarric said.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

US House Committees Send Criminal Referrals to DOJ for Hunter, James Biden - Letter

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - Three US House committees have sent criminal referrals recommending charges against Hunter Biden and James Biden for making false statements and perjury during the impeachment inquiry of President Joe Biden, according to a letter published Wednesday.

"The Committees, attach to this letter a referral for criminal charges against Hunter Biden and James Biden, under 18 USC § 1001 (false statements), and, additionally, for Hunter Biden under 18 USC § 1621 (perjury)," the House Oversight, Judiciary, and Ways and Means Committees said in a letter to US Attorney Merrick Garland and US Attorney David Weiss.

The letter said Hunter and James Biden made materially false statements to the Oversight and Judiciary Committees to shield Joe Biden from an impeachment inquiry, with Hunter denying his affiliation with Rosemont Seneca Bohai, LLC, falsely claiming he threatened the wrong individual, and lying about his father's presence.

"James Biden's denial that Joe Biden's meeting with James Biden, Hunter Biden, and Hunter Biden's business associate for a Chinese transaction, Tony Bobulinski ... appears to be a clumsy attempt to protect Joe Biden from the reality that Joe Biden has indeed met with his family's business associates," the letter added.

Last month, House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Jason Smith said Hunter Biden repeatedly lied to US House lawmakers during their investigation into alleged criminal activity by the Biden family.

US House lawmakers are investigating Biden and his family for alleged criminal activity, including various financial crimes and corruption. The House probe is intended to help determine whether further impeachment proceedings against Biden are warranted.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

US Elites 'Want More Than Anything' to Put US Troops on Ground in Ukraine - Greene

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - High-ranking officials in Washington seek to put US troops on the ground in Ukraine to fight against Russia, US Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene said on Wednesday.

"What is extremely concerning to me is the more aggressive nature of NATO and the more aggressive nature of those high up here in Washington, DC, who want more than anything to have US troops on the ground fighting against Russia, which is absolutely absurd," Greene said in an interview with political commentator Alex Jones.

Greene said that she has consistently opposed congressional funding for the conflict in Ukraine

and called for peace talks.

Greene said it is "heartbreaking" to see videos of young Ukrainian men being forced to fight on the frontlines. Greene said she fears a day where young Americans are sent to fight in Ukraine.

The Biden administration is risking a Third World War by continuing to provide funding and weapons to Ukraine, Greene said.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

Putin Says No Doubt Russia, Iran to Build on Progress in Cooperation Made Under Raisi

ST. PETERSBURG, June 5 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday expressed confidence that Russia and Iran will build on all plans that were made under late President Ebrahim Raisi.

On Wednesday, Putin is holding a conversation with the heads of major international news agencies, including representatives of unfriendly countries on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

"I want to say that we had very good, reliable and business relations with him [Raisi]," Putin said. "We are waiting for the Iranian presidential election to take place. I hope to meet with a new president of Iran at international events, such as the SCO and BRICS. I am confident that we will find a common language and will work to implement all the plans that were outlined by the late President Raisi."

Putin underlined that relations between Russia and Iran are developing well, and in many areas.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

France Calls for UNSC Meeting on Ukraine to Be Held on Friday - Source to Sputnik

UNITED NATIONS, June 5 (Sputnik) - The French mission to the United Nations has requested a UN Security Council meeting on humanitarian issues pertaining to Ukraine to be held on Friday, a UNSC source told Sputnik.

"France called for a Security Council meeting on humanitarian issues in Ukraine for Friday," the source, who works at the UN Security Council, said on Wednesday.

France requested the meeting as a result of recent developments in the city of Kharkov, the source said.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

At Least 30 Russian Journalists Killed in Ukraine Conflict, Probe Obstructed - Putin

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that at least 30 Russian journalists have been killed during the Ukraine conflict.

On Wednesday, Putin is holding a conversation with the heads of major international news agencies, including representatives of unfriendly countries on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF).

"At least 30 people have died, our journalists. And they are not giving us the opportunity to investigate what happened to them," Putin said during a meeting with media representatives.

The SPIEF is taking place from June 5 to 8.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Putin Says Russia Ready to Investigate Death of French Journalist in Ukraine

ST. PETERSBURG, June 5 (Sputnik) - Russia is prepared to organize an investigation into the death of a French journalist in Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday.

"Despite this [resistance from the West on the issue of investigations], we are ready to organize this work ... we will do everything that we can," Putin said during a meeting with the heads of the world's leading news agencies.

US journalist Gonzalo Lira was tortured while in a Ukrainian prison, where he ultimately died, Putin also said.

However, the United States is refusing to raise the question of investigating what happened to Lira, Putin said.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Arizona National Guard Says Can't Meet Kiev's Plea for More F-16 Training, Space Limited

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - An Arizona National Guard spokesperson told Sputnik on Wednesday that its 162nd Wing unit cannot accommodate Ukraine's request to train more of its pilots on F-16 fighter jets because training availability is scarce and multiple other countries have spots reserved throughout the year.

Earlier in the day, Politico reported that Ukraine has been pressuring the United States and its European partners to step up F-16 training for Ukrainian pilots.

"We are limited based on instructor student ratio and aircraft availability," the spokesperson said when asked about Ukraine's request. "On top of the Ukrainian students, there are multiple other countries that have reserved training throughout the year."

Last month, several Ukrainian pilots from a group of 12 completed training on F-16 fighter jets at Morris Air National Guard Base in Arizona, which is a premier F-16 fighter pilot training school. More are expected to complete their training through the summer.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Pentagon Says Cannot Confirm Whether US Small Diameter Bomb Used in Rafah Camp Strike

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - Deputy Pentagon Press Secretary Sabrina Singh said on Wednesday that the Defense Department cannot confirm whether a US-provided small diameter bomb was used in an Israeli strike on a Rafah camp last month, which resulted in civilian casualties.

"I cannot confirm that. I've seen the reports," Singh said during a press briefing, when asked to confirm reports on the matter.

An analysis conducted by the corporate media outlet CNN found that US-made munitions were used in the Israeli strike on a displacement camp in Rafah, which killed at least 45 people and injured hundreds of others after fire broke out.

Explosives experts reportedly identified parts of a US-made GBU-39 small diameter bomb at the scene of the incident.

On October 7, the Palestinian organization Hamas launched a large-scale attack on Israel from the Gaza Strip, killing nearly 1,200 Israelis - both military and civilians - and abducting some 240 others. Israel subsequently imposed a complete blockade of Gaza and launched military operations there, killing some 37,000 Palestinians, according to the local authorities.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Pentagon Says Cannot Confirm US Weapons Being Used to Strike Russia

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - The US Defense Department said on Wednesday that it can not confirm that US weapons are being used by Ukraine to strike targets inside Russia and referred all questions to the Ukrainian authorities.

"I have seen the reports of that. I can not confirm it right now. I have to refer you to the Ukrainians to speak to their operations," Defense Department spokesperson Sabrina Singh said.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### State Dept. Says Decision to Allow US Weapons for Strikes Inside Russia 'Appropriate'

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - President Joe Biden's decision to allow Ukraine to use US-supplied weapons for limited strikes inside Russia is an appropriate response to Moscow's military operation, State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said on Wednesday.

"We think this is an appropriate response," Miller said during a press briefing.

Miller added that the United States does not consider its decision escalatory and will continue

to take "appropriate actions" in response to Russia's special military operation.

Earlier in the day, the US Defense Department told Sputnik it cannot confirm at present reports that Ukraine has started to use US-provided weapons to hit Russian military targets inside Russia.

The spokesperson added that the new US guidance has just gone into effect and is specifically focused on helping Ukraine defend against military targets just over the border that Russia is using to launch offensives against Ukraine.

US policy with respect to prohibiting the use of ATACMS or long range strikes inside of Russia has not changed, the spokesperson noted.

President Putin has warned NATO nations that they should realize "what they are playing with" when they allow Ukraine to use Western weapons to strike Russian territory.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Putin Calls Prosecution of Trump Use of Judicial System for Internal Political Struggle

ST. PETERSBURG, June 5 (Sputnik) – Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that the prosecution of former US President Donald Trump is the use of the judicial system for internal political struggle.

"It is clear to the whole world that prosecuting Trump, especially on charges based on events that happened years ago without direct evidence, is simply the use of the judicial system as part of the political struggle," Putin said during a meeting with the heads of the world's leading news agencies on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

He noted that Trump's rating rose and his political campaign donations increased after the jury declared him guilty.

"This suggests that people in the United States do not trust the judicial system that makes such decisions, and believe that they are being made for political reasons," Putin said.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### US House Oversight Committee Recommends Criminal Charges Against Hunter Biden, James Biden for Making False Statements to Congress - Letter

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Putin Says Russia Does Not Care Who Wins 2024 US Presidential Election, Will Not Interfere

ST. PETERSBURG, June 5 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that Russia does not care who wins the 2024 presidential election in the United States and will not interfere with the race.

"By and large, we don't care," Putin said during a meeting with the heads of the world's leading

news agencies, when asked about whether Russia prefers Joe Biden or Donald Trump.

The result of the election does not matter much for Russia, which will work with any duly elected US president, Putin said. Nothing serious will change in US-Russia relations as a result of the election, Putin said.

Russia has not and will not interfere in the US political process, Putin said. The US is "burning itself" from the inside in the course of its internal political struggles, Putin said.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

UN Not Expected to Sign Any Documents at Ukraine Peace Summit in Switzerland - Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, June 5 (Sputnik) - The United Nations is not expected to sign any document that would be a product of the so-called Ukraine peace summit in Switzerland, as it will participate as an observer, UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said on Wednesday.

"The United Nations is not expected to sign any product of the peace summit in Switzerland, as it will participate with the status of observer," Dujarric said during a press briefing.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

US Embassy Local Guard Seriously Injured in Beirut Shooting - State Dept.

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - A member of the United States embassy's local guard force in Beirut was seriously injured, State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said on Wednesday.

"One member of the embassy's local guard force was seriously injured," Miller said during a press briefing.

Earlier on Wednesday, the Lebanese military said that a Syrian citizen opened fire on the US embassy in Beirut. The Syrian national was injured after the intervention of the security guards and was detained.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

UN Chief Says Carbon Budget Will Be Exceeded by 2030 at Current 'Reckless Speed'

UNITED NATIONS, June 5 (Sputnik) - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Wednesday that the carbon budget will be exceeded by 2030 if the world burns through it at the current "reckless speed."

"The truth is we are burning through the budget at reckless speed, spewing out around 40 billion tons of carbon dioxide a year," Guterres said during a special address on climate action. "At these rates, the entire carbon budget will be busted before 2030."

Guterres explained that the difference between 1.5 degrees and 2 degrees Celsius could mean the difference between the extinction or survival of some small island states and coastal communities.

"1.5 degrees [Celsius] is not a target. It's not a goal. It's a physical limit," Guterres said.

Earlier on Wednesday, a new report dubbed Indicators of Global Climate Change 2023 was released by 50 international scientists, saying that the remaining carbon budget has been significantly reduced.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### White House Slams Wall Street Journal Report on Biden's Mental Fitness

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) – White House spokesperson Andrew Bates criticized on Wednesday a Wall Street Journal report detailing US President Biden's failing mental fitness, according to an Axios report.

"It's a little surprising that The Wall Street Journal thought it was breaking news when congressional Republicans told them the same false claims they've spouted on Fox News for years, but it's also telling that the only individuals willing to smear the President in this story are political opponents afraid to use their names — plus one proven liar," Bates said, as quoted by Axios.

On Tuesday, The Wall Street Journal had published a detailed report containing many anecdotes and examples attesting to Biden's "slipping" mental fitness, based on interviews conducted with more than 45 people who had either participated in meetings with Biden or were briefed about them. Bates' comments had been included, although the general tone of the article was not favorable toward the 81-year-old president.

Biden's mental fitness has been an ongoing point of contention among his opponents. According to a recent Pew Research Center survey, only 21% of Americans say they are confident in his mental fitness and 15% in his physical fitness.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### Oil Struggles to Recover as US Supply Builds Kick Up Demand Worries

NEW YORK, June 5 (Sputnik) - Oil prices increased on Wednesday for the first time in six days but the recovery was modest after data showed more builds in US crude and fuel stockpiles that raised questions about demand ahead of the summer travel period for Americans.

The US Energy Information Administration said crude oil balances rose by more than one million barrels last week to offset some of the prior week's drop of over four-million barrels, while inventories increased by more than two million barrels for gasoline and over three million for distillates.

Oil prices on the New York Mercantile Exchange began Wednesday's trading on a positive note as buyers entered the market enticed by crude contracts made cheaper by five days of losses.

Following the data on US crude and fuel builds, the market fell from its highs of the day.

By 11:48 a.m. in New York (16:48 GMT), the front-month July contract for US-origin West Texas Intermediate crude was up 32 cents, or 0.5%, at \$73.57 per barrel after rising to \$73.89 earlier. The session low was \$72.82, the lowest price for a US crude benchmark since February.

The front-month August contract for UK-origin Brent crude, the global benchmark for oil, was up 41 cents, or 0.5%, at \$77.93. Brent's high for Wednesday was \$78.15 while its low was \$77.15, a nadir since February.

Both the US crude benchmark and Brent are already about 4% lower from just three days of June trading, adding to the 6% drop experienced in May.

Oil extended its declines this week on worries that global oil producing alliance OPEC+ will not provide adequate support with its output cuts to offset weak summer demand for fuels.

OPEC, the global oil producing alliance, affirmed on Sunday that it will carry out output cuts through 2025, extending commitments initially set until the end of summer. OPEC+, which groups the 13-member Saudi-led Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries with 10 other oil producing nations steered by Russia, will attempt to cut 2.2 million barrels per day from its joint production .

The problem for oil bulls though is nagging market fear that the reductions will not be enough to compensate for potentially weaker-than-usual demand for fuels this summer, especially with rising crude output from non-OPEC+ producers led by the United States.

To add to market consternation, OPEC+ suggested that if demand improved by the year end, the alliance would add more than 500,000 barrels per day to the market by December, and 1.8 million by June 2025.

Meanwhile, US oil supplies are increasing, adding to the weight on crude prices.

In Wednesday's inventory data, the Energy Information Administration said US crude balances rose by 1.233 million barrels during the week ended May 31 after a prior weekly drop of 4.156 million barrels. Energy analysts on Wall Street had anticipated a drop of 2.1 million barrels instead.

Gasoline stockpiles rose by 2.102 million, adding to the prior weekly build of 2.022 million, while distillates showed a 3.197 million barrel gain after the previous rise of 2.544 million.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

IS Terrorists Must Be Held to Account Under Iraqi Judicial System - Russian Diplomat

UNITED NATIONS, June 5 (Sputnik) - All terrorists belonging to the Islamic State (ISIL, banned in Russia) who have committed crimes in Iraq must be held accountable under the Iraqi judicial system, Russian Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations Maria Zabolotskaya said on Wednesday.

"The Russian delegation firmly believes that international crimes perpetrated by ISIL terrorists have no statutory limitations and all related perpetrators need to be held to account under the Iraqi national judicial system," Zabolotskaya said during a UN Security Council meeting on promoting accountability for crimes committed by the Islamic State in Iraq.

Therefore, it is necessary to hand over all collected information and materials on Islamic State terrorists to the Iraqi authorities, Zabolotskaya added.

In April, Iraq's supreme military commission and the US-led coalition forces operating in the country agreed that the Iraqi security forces are capable of neutralizing on their own the threat posed by the Islamic State.

However, work will continue on developing a timeline for the transition to a bilateral partnership between Iraq and the United States.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### First Crewed Boeing Starliner Spacecraft Successfully Launches to ISS After Several Delays

(Adds details in paras 3,4)

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - Boeing's first crewed CST-100 Starliner spacecraft successfully launched on Wednesday from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida following two failed attempts in recent weeks.

The Starliner spacecraft is on its way to the International Space Station (ISS) carrying NASA astronauts Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams.

Boeing's Starliner crew flew into space atop the Atlas V rocket made by US aerospace manufacturer United Launch Alliance, which uses a Russian-built RD-180 first stage engine.

Starliner successfully separated from the Atlas V rocket's upper stage booster rocket Centaur and will cruise through space for 26 hours before reaching the ISS on Thursday.

The initial launch attempt was slated for May 6, but it was scrubbed due to a stuck valve on Starliner's rocket launcher. The valve was replaced, but engineers also discovered a helium leak in one of the spacecraft's engines.

The Starliner completed an uncrewed test flight to the ISS in 2022. Boeing planned to conduct its first manned Starliner test flight in July 2023 but Boeing and NASA had to redesign the landing for two reentry parachutes on the vehicle, along with other issues.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### US Counterintelligence Claims China Headhunting NATO Pilots to Bolster Its Air Force

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) – China is allegedly seeking expertise from Western pilots and other military specialists to train its aviators as part of ongoing efforts to bolster the air force capabilities of the People's Liberation Army, the National Counterintelligence and Security Center (NCSC) said on Wednesday.

"The PLA is using private companies in South Africa and China to hire former fighter pilots from Canada, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, and other Western nations to train PLA Air Force and Navy aviators. The PLA wants the skills and expertise of these individuals to make its own military air operations more capable while gaining insight into Western air tactics, techniques, and procedures," NCSC said in a notice.

The use of Western military expertise could allegedly lead to the improvement of the PLA's operations and enable it to better counter Western military strategies to the detriment of US national security, according to the notice.

The current US National Defense Strategy describes China as the key US strategic competitor and pacing challenge. US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has on many occasions said that China presents a pacing threat to US national security interests.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### US House Passes \$378.6Bln Appropriations Bill for Military Construction, Veterans Affairs

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives on Wednesday passed the Fiscal Year 2025 appropriations bill with some \$378.6 billion in funding for military construction and veterans affairs.

House lawmakers passed the bill in a vote of 209 in favor and 197 opposed.

The bill provides \$231.1 billion for mandatory programs and \$378.6 billion in overall funding, according to a House Appropriations Committee summary of the legislation.

The legislation fully funds veterans' healthcare and benefits programs. The bill also funds projects in the Indo-Pacific region.

The bill maintains prohibitions on the closure of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay and on the use of military construction funds to build facilities for detainees on US soil.

Moreover, the legislation prohibits the use of funds to promote or advance critical race theory and bans the implementation of the Biden administration's executive orders on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

#### First Crewed Boeing Starliner Spacecraft Successfully Launches to ISS After Several Delays

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - Boeing's first crewed CST-100 Starliner spacecraft successfully launched on Wednesday from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida following two failed attempts in recent weeks.

The Starliner spacecraft is on its way to the International Space Station (ISS) carrying NASA astronauts Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams.

The initial launch attempt was slated for May 6, but it was scrubbed due to a stuck valve on Starliner's rocket launcher. The valve was replaced, but engineers also discovered a helium leak in one of the spacecraft's engines.

The Starliner completed an uncrewed test flight to the ISS in 2022. Boeing planned to conduct its first manned Starliner test flight in July 2023 but Boeing and NASA had to redesign the linking for two reentry parachutes on the vehicle, along with other issues.

**This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Kart LLC. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.**

US House Subcommittee Advances \$833B In Defense Appropriations Bill for FY2025 - Statement

WASHINGTON, June 5 (Sputnik) - The US House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee advanced an \$833 billion defense appropriations bill for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, the panel said on Wednesday.

“As we face renewed threats and aggressors across the globe, providing our men and women in uniform with the tools needed to deter, fight, and win is critically important. This FY25 bill strengthens America’s defense and the readiness of our armed forces,” US House Appropriations Committee Chairman Tom Cole said in a statement.

The legislation allocates \$833.053 billion in defense funding, which is 1% above the FY2024 level.

The bill provides \$200 million for Taiwan’s international security cooperation programs and prioritizing defense articles and services for Taiwan.

The bill also provides \$500 million for the Israeli Cooperative Missile Defense Programs, which includes the Iron Dome, David’s Sling and Arrow missile defense systems.

However, the legislation does not include Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative funding.

The bill funds a 4.5% pay raise for all US military personnel and provides \$2.5 billion for an additional 15% pay raise for junior enlisted servicemembers.

Moreover, the legislation prohibits funding for diversity, equity and inclusion offices, bans the use of funds for sex-change operations and prohibits the promotion of Critical Race Theory.