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7/22/24 Monday

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Netanyahu Has No Intention To Reach Ceasefire

On Sunday, US media reported– citing a senior Middle East diplomat– that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu planned to wait until after the US Presidential election before returning to peace negotiations in Gaza. It was another in a series of delays by Netanyahu that have frustrated peace advocates and families of Israeli hostages.

Benjamin Netanyahu has no intention to reach a ceasefire agreement in Gaza because the West and the United States in particular have given Israel a free hand, allowing them to act without consequences, veteran war correspondent Elijah Magnier told Sputnik's Fault Lines on Monday.

"[Netanyahu is] killing children… on the basis they… will grow up one day and [so] we have to kill them today. This is [the] exact same thinking of the Nazis during the Second World War with the Jews," explained Magnier. "So we have history repeating itself but today in different ways and the problem that it touches upon is the Americans are the only country in the world who are supplying an indefinite supply of weapons and ammunition to Israel."

"If this supply doesn't stop, nothing is going to stop for Netanyahu. And why doesn't this supply stop? Because the politicians in the United States fear for their position," he concluded.

Multiple times since the start of the year, the United States announced that a ceasefire deal had been agreed to in principle, or that the Israelis had presented a peace deal to Hamas, but every time the Israelis backed out or modified it.

"[US President Joe] Biden came out and said there were modifications, now we have an Israeli document, and then Hamas accepted it and then Israel again refused it. And then in the last speech, Benjamin Netanyahu put on the table the new conditions. The first condition is that he's not going to withdraw from the Philadelphi corridor, that's 40m separating Gaza from Egypt," explained Magnier. "That's a violation of the 1978 Camp David agreement between Egypt and Israel… but not only [that], he also gave another condition that he wants to stay in what he called the Netzarim corridor that is dividing the north of Gaza from the south of Gaza, which means maintaining forces… able attack anywhere in Gaza."

In late June, a month after Biden claimed in a televised address that a ceasefire agreement had been proposed by the Israeli side, Netanyahu told Israeli media that the agreement would only include a "partial" ceasefire and said Israel was still committed to the "goal of eliminating Hamas."

"So this [Netzarim corridor] condition means that there is no end to the military hostility and the war will continue endlessly. This is what Netanyahu is saying. 'I want to continue the war until I kill every single member of Hamas' …how can he have a deal with the Palestinians and then at the same time [be] saying I want to kill you all?"

Netanyahu's continual refusals to seriously consider a peace deal has become obvious to even the Israelis, who are largely okay with his violent tactics but want to see a return of the remaining Israeli hostages.

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“The families of the prisoners and the captives are saying ‘Actually, you don’t want our children back,’” Magnier explained.
On Monday, Netanyahu landed in Washington DC, where he plans to meet with Biden and speak to the US Congress. He was followed by several family members of Israeli hostages who plan to protest his speech on Wednesday.
“But the problem is not in Israel. Israel has a free hand. The problem is all the West that’s supporting Israel and not putting an end to this plan. Israel has been given three months to achieve its objectives, then six months, and then nine months. [Now] we are in the tenth month… I don’t know what’s going to happen. As long as Israel enjoys the full support of the United States, anything can happen,” Magnier warned, adding that “on the other hand” Hezbollah, the Ansar Allah Houthis and the Iraqi resistance are not going to stand idle while Israel slaughters Gazans with US support “without doing something that forces a high cost on the Israelis.”
“We have seen only… the tip of the iceberg,” said Magnier, clarifying that the “whole iceberg” will be “a multi-front war on Israel for one objective: to stop the war on Gaza.”

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US Actor George Clooney Endorses Kamala Harris for President - Statement

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - US actor George Clooney said in a statement on Tuesday that he is endorsing Vice President Kamala Harris for president of the United States.
"President [Joe] Biden has shown what true leadership is. He’s saving democracy once again. We’re all so excited to do whatever we can to support Vice President Harris in her historic quest," Clooney said in the statement given to CNN.
On Sunday, Biden announced that he would withdraw from the 2024 presidential race and endorsed Harris for president.
On Monday, Harris secured endorsements from state convention delegations that represent about 70% of delegates who would vote on the first ballot at the Democratic Party convention scheduled to take place in Chicago from August 19-22.

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US House Launches Task Force to Investigate Trump Assassination Attempt - Speaker

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives will launch a task force to investigate the assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump, House Speaker Mike Johnson said on Tuesday.
"The security failures that allowed an assassination attempt on Donald Trump’s life are shocking. In response, [House Minority Leader Hakeem] Jeffries and I are announcing a House task force made up of seven Republicans and six Democrats to thoroughly investigate the

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matter," Johnson said via X.

The task force will be empowered with subpoena authority and will move quickly to find the facts, Johnson added.

On July 13, a gunman attempted to assassinate Trump during a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, but Trump evaded death by tilting his head at the last second and only sustained a wound to his right ear.

The US Secret Service, which eventually killed the gunman, has been severely criticized for its failure to act in time to prevent the incident.

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US, UAE, Israel Hold Secret Meeting on Post-War Plan for Gaza – Reports

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) – Officials from the United States, Israel, and the UAE held a secret meeting to discuss a future plan for Gaza after the end of the war, Axios reported on Tuesday, citing two Israeli officials.

The meeting took place last Thursday in Abu Dhabi and was hosted by UAE foreign minister Abdullah Bin Zayed. US President Joe Biden's top Middle East adviser Brett McGurk and State Department counselor Tom Sullivan represented the US side, while Israeli Minister for Strategic Affairs Ron Dermer led the Israeli team, the report said.

UAE special envoy Lana Nusseibeh had unveiled an Emirati peace plan a day before the Israeli delegation arrived to Abu Dhabi. The plan includes the participation of international forces in peace solution and calls on Palestinian authorities to conduct meaningful reforms, according to the report.

Israel should provide Palestinian authorities an opportunity to play a role in governing Gaza and agree to a political process based on the two-state solution, it added.

The UAE wants to be involved in crafting a post-war plan for governing Gaza that does not include Hamas, according to the report.

On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched a large-scale rocket attack against Israel and breached the border, attacking both civilian neighborhoods and military bases. Nearly 1,200 people in Israel were killed, and some 240 others were abducted during the attack.

Israel launched retaliatory strikes, ordered a complete blockade of Gaza, and started a ground incursion into the Palestinian enclave with the declared goal of eliminating Hamas fighters and rescuing the hostages. The death toll from Israeli strikes in Gaza has topped 39,000, with almost 90,000 people injured, according to the enclave's health ministry.

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Illinois Resident Sentenced to Two Years for Illegal Exports to Russia – US Attorney

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) – An Illinois resident was sentenced to two years in federal prison on Monday for conspiring to export to Russia defense items without a license, according

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to a release from the US Attorney's Office in the Central District of California.

"An Illinois woman was sentenced today to 24 months in federal prison for conspiring to unlawfully export to Russia defense articles – including thermal imaging riflescopes and night-vision goggles – without a license in violation of the Arms Export Control Act," the release stated.

Elena Shifrin, 62, of Mundelein, Illinois, had pleaded guilty in February 2022 to one count of conspiracy to violate the Arms Export Control Act. From 2017 to 2020, Shifrin participated in exporting more than 60 defense articles to Russia without obtaining a valid license or other approval from the State Department, the release said.

Her co-conspirators purchased the defense articles – including thermal riflescopes, weapons sights, monoculars and night-vision googles – from online sellers in the US with Shifrin or other co-conspirators in Illinois and California as the recipients.

When Shifrin exported the defense articles to Russia, she listed fictitious sender names and addresses on the packages, falsely identified the articles as non-export-controlled items such as clothing, and concealed them in toolkits and kitchen appliances, according to the release.

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Biden Administration Announces New Steps to Reduce Pollution Globally - Senior Official

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - The Biden administration is announcing new actions to help reduce pollution globally, a senior US administration official told reporters.

"The US and its partners will be announcing further efforts to accelerate progress to reduce super pollutants globally," the official said. "We'll be announcing new funding, including over $300 million in new funding from a consortium of philanthropies to the global methane hub to support methane reductions, especially in low and middle-income countries."

The United States will also announce new partnerships to advance superpollutant detection, including a collaboration between United Airlines and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to use commercial aircraft to significantly enhance monitoring of climate superpollutants, according to the official.

Other actions include the expansion of international programs, including new participation in the UN environmental programs, the International Methane Emissions Observatory, and its methane alert and response system (MARS), the official added.

After Tuesday's announcement, the official said, a total of 15 countries will participate in MARS, a public satellite detection and notification system for methane super emitter events worldwide.

Moreover, several US companies will commit to helping reduce US industrial nitrous oxide emissions, the official said.

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Upcoming 2024 Olympics Good Time to Settle Up Peace - Ex-US Envoy

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WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - The upcoming 2024 Olympic Games in Paris is a good time to establish peace solutions in conflicts and find alternatives to war around the world, former US Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young told Sputnik.

"I think that the upcoming Olympics is a good time to find the alternatives to war," Young said.

Peacebuilding was the original intention of the Olympics when this competition was just in its beginning, he added.

Young served as mayor of Atlanta, Georgia, until early 1990 and was directly involved in the preparation of the city's bid to host the Olympics. He also served as co-chair of the Atlanta Committee for the 1996 Olympic Games.

Young emphasized that efforts made via the Olympic truce during the 1996 Olympics helped stop dozens of conflicts all over the world.

"Our Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games went to UNICEF, and we said: 'We would like you to work with us to stop all wars during the Olympics in Atlanta.' And they were able to do that in 37 different conflicts," Young said.

The Atlanta Committee raised enough money to convince conflicting parties to keep the Olympic truce for about 20 days and to focus on the education and healthcare of children. All the money arrived from private donors, including celebrities, Young said.

"The first contribution we got was from Garth Brooks, a country singer. When we asked him if he could help us, he said he was really busy, but he would like to make a contribution. And he wrote the first $1 million dollar check, privately, to help immunize children around the world," Young said.

Other people began to make contributions because they wanted to stop diseases and make children healthy, Young added.

The Paris 2024 Summer Olympics will be held from July 26 to August 11, while the Paralympic Games will run from August 28 to September 8.

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US, Russia Must Return to Cooperation for Prosperity – Former US Envoy

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) – The United States and Russia should reestablish their partnership, particularly in the Olympic movement, as peace leads to prosperity, former US Ambassador to the UN Andrew Young told Sputnik.

Young, who served as Mayor of Atlanta until the early 1990s, was directly involved in preparing the city's bid to host the Olympics.

"I was a mayor of Atlanta, and we were so interested in Russia supporting us," Young, who also served as co-chair of the Atlanta Committee for the 1996 Olympic Games, said.

He recalled that several years before the 1996 Olympics, 3,000 citizens of Atlanta visited Russia as part of people-to-people diplomacy.

"It was not political at all. It was friendship, it was development, it was prosperity sharing, and it was a pathway to peace. And I wish we would get back on it because peace leads to prosperity," he said.

Over 10,000 athletes from 197 nations participated in the Olympic Games in Atlanta from July

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19 – August 4, 1996. The US won the team competition with 40 gold medals, while Russia was second on the list with 26 gold medals.

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US, Russia Potential Allies In Global Development – Former US Envoy

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) – Despite current disagreements, the US and Russia remain potential allies in global development, former US Ambassador to the UN Andrew Young told Sputnik.

"I always saw the US and Russia as potential allies in the development of the planet," Young said.

He stressed that both countries need peace and prosperity to build a partnership.

The 92-year-old diplomat, who served in the UN during the peak of the Cold War, pointed out that focusing on prosperity, not on confrontation, provides more chances for peace.

"In my mind, war is not the reasonable thing for men to do anywhere. Until people come together and develop, then there will be no peace," he said.

Young recalled that during his service at the UN from 1977-1979, he was best friends with his Soviet counterpart, Oleg Troyanovsky.

"Once a month almost, we would get together, with his wife and my wife, and we played, as we said in the UN, 'diplomatic doubles' in tennis. We never talked politics, but we built the relationship so that when we had to talk politics at the UN, we were not strangers – we were friends," Young said.

The relationship between the US and Russia has significantly deteriorated since February 2022, when Moscow launched its special military operation in Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin has said the operation aims to "protect people subjected to genocide by the Kiev regime for eight years." According to the president, the ultimate goal of the operation is to liberate Donbas and create conditions that guarantee Russia's security.

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Mideast Peace in Everybody's Interest, Not Just Israel and Palestine - Ex-US Envoy to UN

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) – The whole world, not only Israel and Palestine, is interested in resolving the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, former US ambassador to the UN Andrew Young told Sputnik.

"It is in everybody's interest to settle up the Middle East, not just Israel and Palestine," Young said.

He expressed confidence that other countries, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran, the US, Egypt, are interested in a resolution to the decades-old conflict.

"Everybody prospers when the world is at peace, and the world cannot be at peace at the same time if it spends so much money on death and destruction," he said.

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Young, now 92, who served at the UN from 1977-1979, recalled his conversations with the Israelis and the Palestinians at that time.

"When I was at the UN, there was a time that I had both Palestinians and Israelis meeting with me, trying to get them to meet and bring them together. There was a real interest in peace," he said.

Young said he believes the key to resolving the conflict rests in "a kind of no-fault solution."

"We do not want to re-fight all wars. We want to stop them," he said.

The current war in Gaza is not good for anybody, and the international community needs to stop the violence and do something to build a better world, the retired diplomat stated.

On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched a large-scale rocket attack against Israel and breached the border, attacking both civilian neighborhoods and military bases. Nearly 1,200 people in Israel were killed, and some 240 others were abducted during the attack. Israel launched retaliatory strikes, ordered a complete blockade of Gaza, and started a ground incursion into the Palestinian enclave with the declared goal of eliminating Hamas fighters and rescuing the hostages.

The death toll from Israeli strikes in Gaza has topped 39,000, with almost 90,000 people injured, according to the enclave's health ministry.

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Carter Sent Mid-East Parties Peace Message With Photo of His Grandchildren - Ex-US Envoy

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - Former US President Jimmy Carter gave a positive signal for the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the late 1970s by presenting a photograph of his grandchildren to then-Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, former US Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young told Sputnik.

“The parties could not make any headway, and we had decided that they could not do it. [But] President Carter gave Israeli Prime Minister Begin and Egyptian President Sadat a picture of himself with his eight grandchildren,” Young said.

Young served at the United Nations from 1977-1979 and participated in enabling the peace process between Israel and Egypt.

The Israeli prime minister returned to the negotiation table after receiving Carter's photo and the parties reached an agreement in three days, Young said.

“What did this picture say to them? If you do not do this now, your children and grandchildren are going to be doing it,” Young added.

The Egypt-Israel peace treaty was signed in Washington in 1979. The treaty included an end to the state of war, mutual recognition, normalization of relations, and a gradual complete withdrawal of Israeli forces and civilians from Sinai to the international border. The agreement made Egypt the first Arab state to officially recognize Israel.

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Solution for Middle East Not Hard, People Must Think About Living Together - Ex-US Envoy

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - Finding a solution for the Middle East conflict is not hard, and all interested parties must think about living and sharing the same planet, former US Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young told Sputnik.

"It is not hard [to reach a solution]. It was easy in many conflicts and we probably could do this now," Young said when asked what the international community should do to stop the fighting in the Middle East.

Young, who served at the United Nations from 1977-1979, said people have to think about themselves as human beings on the same planet and urged them to start talking about the future of Earth.

"I just wish we could work together to build a peaceful relationship with each other," Young said.

On October 7, 2023, the Palestinian movement Hamas attacked Israel from the Gaza Strip and killed more than 1,100 Israelis - both military and civilian - and took some 240 others hostage. Israel implemented a complete blockade of Gaza and started a bombing campaign that ended in a ground invasion of the Palestinian enclave, Some 40,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israel's military operations and nearly 90,000 wounded.

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US Faces Issue of Small Minority Controlling Nearly Half of Nation's Wealth - Former Envoy

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) – The United States is facing an issue where a small number of people control nearly half of the nation's wealth, former US Ambassador to the UN Andrew Young told Sputnik.

“I think our biggest problem now is that too few people have too much money,” Young said.

He pointed out that 1% of Americans possess almost half of the wealth of the entire country.

Young, 92, began his political career in 1973 when he was elected to the US House of Representatives. In 1977, President Jimmy Carter appointed him to serve as the US ambassador to the United Nations, and he became the first African American to hold this position.

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Приспущенный флаг над Капитолием породил спекуляции в сети о кончине Байдена

ВАШИНГТОН, 23 июл - РИА Новости. Флаг над зданием Капитолия приспущен в связи с недавней кончиной конгрессвумен от Демократической партии Шейлой Джексон Ли, передает корреспондент РИА Новости на фоне подогреваемых в соцсетях слухов касательно многодневного отсутствия на публике президента США Джо Байдена.

Джексон Ли, представлявшая 18-й округ Техаса в палате представителей, ушла из жизни 19 июля. Байден в своем заявлении по этому случаю вспоминал ее, как упорного борца за

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справедливость и защитницу американского народа.
По правилам конгресса в случае смерти одного из членов флаг над Капитолием приспускается в день смерти и на следующий, зачастую траур продлевают вплоть до дня похорон.
Несмотря на то что приспущенный над правительственным зданием в США флаг не является редкостью, флаги приспускают не только в случае смерти действующего или бывшего чиновника, но и в связи с национальными катастрофами, стихийными бедствиями, случаями массовой стрельбы - приспущенный флаг над Капитолием совпал с опасениям по поводу здоровья Байдена, породив массу слухов в соцсетях. Многие пользователи безосновательно утверждают, что флаг приспустили в связи с якобы кончиной Байдена, они также утверждают, что от американского народа "скрывают смерть президента".
Байден остается на изоляции с прошлой недели из-за обнаруженного у него коронавируса. За последние дни американский президент ни разу не появлялся на публике, а в минувшее воскресенье и вовсе опубликовал письмо о решении отказаться от планов по переизбранию, хотя в последние недели неоднократно повторял, что выходить из гонки не собирается.
Отсутствие президента вызывает все больше вопросов в американском обществе и политическом пространстве. В частности, конгрессвумен от республиканцев Лорен Боберт в понедельник потребовала от Байдена до конца дня доказать, что он жив, на фоне спекуляций о состоянии его здоровья.

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Приспущенный флаг над Капитолием породил спекуляции в сети о кончине Байдена

ВАШИНГТОН, 23 июл - РИА Новости. Флаг над зданием Капитолия приспущен в связи с недавней кончиной конгрессвумен от Демократической партии Шейлой Джексон Ли, передает корреспондент РИА Новости на фоне подогреваемых в соцсетях слухов касательно многодневного отсутствия на публике президента США Джо Байдена.
Джексон Ли, представлявшая 18-й округ Техаса в палате представителей, ушла из жизни 19 июля. Байден в своем заявлении по этому случаю вспоминал ее, как упорного борца за справедливость и защитницу американского народа.
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Biggest US Problem Having Too Many Weapons, Shootings - Ex-US Envoy to UN

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - The biggest problem of the United States is that its citizens possess too many weapons, which leads to numerous shootings, former US Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young told Sputnik.

“I am concerned about my country, very much so. I think our biggest problem is that we have too many weapons,” Young said when asked to comment on the recent assassination attempt on former US President Donald Trump.

Young noted the tradition of keeping weapons was established in the early days of the United States when Americans were securing food by hunting.

However, there were no automatic rifles at that time to cause the type of harm that is observed today, Young said.

“They kill more people faster and that does not help anybody,” Young said.

Residents in cities and towns like Butler, Pennsylvania, where an assassination attempt against Trump took place on July 13, simply do not need such weapons.

Trump has long been a strong supporter of the Second Amendment of the US Constitution, which guarantees the right of Americans to keep and bear arms.

On July 13, a gunman attempted to assassinate Trump during a campaign rally in Butler, but Trump evaded death by tilting his head at the last second and only sustained a wound to his right ear.

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Harris to Skip Netanyahu's Address to US Congress But Will Host Private Meeting - Reports

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - US Vice President Kamala Harris will skip Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's address to the Congress on Wednesday but will hold a separate private bilateral meeting with him sometime this week, Politico reported citing sources familiar with the matter.

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The report said on Monday that a growing number of congressional Democrats are boycotting Netanyahu's speech over his handling of the war in Gaza.

However, Harris had made some prior commitments before a date was set for Netanyahu to deliver a speech in front of US lawmakers.

According to the report, Harris will use the private meeting with Netanyahu to convey her commitment to Israel's security and right to defend itself but will also underscore her view that it is time to end the conflict in a way that guarantees Israel's security, reaches an agreement to release all hostages, and ends the suffering of Palestinian civilians in Gaza.

Harris plans to discuss with Netanyahu the status of the ongoing negotiations to reach a cease-fire deal in Gaza, the report added.

The report said, citing a person close to the vice president's office, that Harris believes the United States should be tougher on Netanyahu.

On Sunday, President Joe Biden announced that he dropped out of the 2024 US election after he decided it was in the best interest of the Democratic party and the United States. He endorsed Harris to be the Democratic party's nominee for US president, which she accepted.

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Whistleblower Claims Security Abandoned at Rooftop Near Trump Rally Due to Heat - Senator

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - The rooftop of a building where a gunman positioned himself to shoot at Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump during a rally in Pennsylvania was left exposed by US law enforcement because it was too hot outside, US Senator Josh Hawley said in a letter citing a whistleblower.

"Contrary to Director Cheatle's public statement about the 'safety' of the sloped roof of American Glass Research Building 6, one whistleblower with direct knowledge of Secret Service planning for the event alleges that there was supposed to be a law enforcement presence on the roof that day," Hawley said in a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Monday.

The whistleblower alleges that at least one security officer was specifically assigned to be on the roof for the duration of the Trump rally, but this individual abandoned his or her post due to the hot weather, according to Hawley.

Hawley added that the whistleblower further alleges that concerns over the hot weather prompted law enforcement to neglect to patrol the building and instead to station security personnel inside the building.

The senator is asking Mayorkas to provide all records that may be related to this whistleblower's accusations by July 26.

On July 13, a gunman attempted to assassinate Trump during a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, shooting him in the right ear, killing one audience member and wounding two others.

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ANALYSIS - Top Democrats Stay Silent, Hold Off From Endorsing Kamala Harris as Presidential Candidate

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - The leaders of the Democratic party, including former President Barack Obama and the current leaders in both chambers of Congress, are remaining silent and pointedly refusing to support Vice President Kamala Harris, whom President Joe Biden announced as his successor on Sunday after withdrawing from the 2024 presidential election.

Biden's announcement came amid pressure by leading Democrats and donors to do so but left them with only a few weeks to the party's convention in Chicago next month, either to rally around Harris or produce alternate candidates to her in record time.

The two most recent examples in modern US history of a sitting president announcing he would not be seeking reelection to a second term were Harry Truman in 1952 and Lyndon Johnson in 1968. In both cases, they made the announcements early in the election year, leaving plenty of time for party processes and primary contests across the United States to produce the eventual candidates - who lost in both cases.

DEMOCRATS IN CONFUSION

US constitutional historian and political analyst Dan Lazare said Biden's announcement to withdraw from the election but remain in office for the remainder of his term had thrown his own party into confusion.

"The next step in the process is unclear," Lazare said. "Although second-tier Democrats are rushing to endorse Harris, the Big Four - Obama, [former House Speaker Nancy] Pelosi, [Senate Majority Leader Chuck] Schumer and [House Minority Leader Hakeem] Jeffries - are holding back."

Harris has so far failed to convince veteran party leaders that she can be an effective candidate and they are afraid a "coronation" will turn voters off, Lazare said.

So great is the confusion among the Democrats that so far there has not even been any pretense at giving the party's rank-and-file any say in whom their supposedly democratically chosen leader will be, he said.

"The people have already been shut out of the process as a few dozen mega-donors and political bigwigs tried to figure out what to do. Now they're in danger of being shut again as Democrats choose a replacement in the same closed-door manner," Lazare said.

However, this could lead to an unpredictable grassroots rebellion on the convention floor in Chicago next month, or the choice of Harris could be passively accepted after all, Lazare said.

LACK OF ENTHUSIASM

But even if Harris is accepted as the party standard bearer in Chicago without strong opposition, her lack of charisma, achievements and popular support could prove fatal to her chances against Republican candidate Donald Trump in November, Lazare said.

"Concerns over Harris's political abilities are entirely justified. Her 2020 presidential bid was so disastrous that she had to drop out in late 2019," Lazare said.

After three-and-a-half years in office with full national exposure, Harris had still completely

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failed to establish any convincing personal presence, he said.

"She's smarmy, the notorious Kamala cackle rubs everyone the wrong way, and, as far as I can tell, she has never had a single intelligent thing to say about any subject of political importance. She lends new meaning to the phrase 'empty suit,'" Lazare said.

Harris has no choice but to run on Biden's record and the while Biden thinks he has been the greatest president since Franklin Roosevelt, the electorate is not so sure, he said.

KILLER INFLATION, FOREVER WARS

Current conditions both within the United States and around the world bode ill for the Democrats' chances; inflation is a killer and there is also the policy of waging wars around the world, Lazare said.

Harris is also trapped in a no-win dilemma over the Israel-Hamas conflict, which has now been continuing for almost 10 months, he said.

"Harris is already under pressure to speak out about Gaza. But [Republican candidate Donald] Trump will pounce on her if she tries to throw peace forces a bone and much of the party base will bolt. My guess is she'll waffle, which will only make things worse," Lazare said.

Harris' clear track record marked her out as a weak candidate likely to lose decisively in November given she has plenty of deficiencies, her political record is full of holes and she's up against a consummate political performer, Lazare added.

LACK OF LEADERSHIP

Before she could even fight an uphill battle against a confident Trump, Harris still had to win her party's nomination in Chicago, University of Pittsburgh Professor of Political Affairs Michael Brenner said.

However, the Democrats' current leadership is of such poor quality they are incapable of rising to the challenge before them to launch an aggressive campaign that personalizes the contest and select any credible candidate, he said.

"Even as the outside challenger to a mainstream incumbent Democratic administration, Trump had ensured that the 2024 election would be focused on him personally, not at all in line with conventional contests but a referendum on Trump," Brenner said.

In the current election, it is not enough to just oppose Trump; Democrats need a candidate who could present a convincing vision in his or her right, Brenner added.

Billionaire George Soros' son Alex Soros, Wall Street executive Marc Lasry and venture capitalist Reid Hoffman have all already endorsed Harris for president.

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Harris Says Jen O'Malley Dillon Will Run 2024 US Presidential Campaign

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - US Vice President Kamala Harris said during a campaign event that Jen O'Malley Dillon will run her 2024 presidential campaign, following US President Joe Biden's decision to end his reelection bid.

Harris said on Monday that O'Malley Dillon will run the campaign alongside Julie Chavez Rodriguez.

O'Malley Dillon previously served as Deputy White House Chief of Staff for Biden and Chavez

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Rodriguez previously served as a senior adviser to Biden.
Biden also joined the event remotely after being infected with COVID-19.
On Sunday, Biden withdrew from the 2024 US presidential election and endorsed Harris as the Democratic Party's nominee.

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Biden Directs Yellen, Blinken to Carry Out REPO Act Authorities - Memorandum

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden said in a memorandum that US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Secretary of State Antony Blinken are responsible for carrying out functions and authorities of the Rebuilding Economic Prosperity and Opportunity (REPO) for Ukrainians Act.
The REPO Act authorizes the Biden administration to seize frozen Russian sovereign assets in the United States to help reconstruction efforts in Ukraine.
The memorandum, released Monday, delegates certain authorities and functions of the act to Yellen and Blinken.
Moscow has criticized efforts to seize its sovereign assets as a violation of international law.
In April, US Senator and Republican Party vice presidential nominee JD Vance said that the REPO Act would hinder efforts to engage in diplomacy.

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Sen. Sanders Says Against Netanyahu Delivering Speech in US Congress This Week

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) – US Senator Bernie Sanders said that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should not be welcomed into the US Congress for his refusal to support a two-state solution and for killing nearly 40,000 Palestinians in Gaza.
"No. Netanyahu should not be welcomed into the United States Congress. On the contrary, his policies in Gaza and the West Bank and his refusal to support a two-state solution should be roundly condemned. In my view, his right-wing, extremist government should not receive another nickel of U.S. taxpayer support to continue the inhumane destruction of Gaza," Sanders said in a statement on Monday.
According to Sanders, Netanyahu's government's war on Gaza has made the enclave unlivable and has left nearly 500,000 people facing starvation.
Netanyahu is due to address a joint session of Congress on Wednesday.
There are also reports that Netanyahu has requested a meeting with former US President Donald Trump. However, it is unclear whether the latter has agreed to meet with the prime minister amid a rift in their relations that took place in 2020 when the Israeli leader hailed Biden's victory in the presidential election against Trump.

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Oil Price Hits 6-Week Low, Sending US Crude Beneath $80 Per Barrel

NEW YORK, July 22 (Sputnik) - Oil prices continued their downward spiral to six-week lows on Monday, with US crude breaking beneath the $80 per barrel mark, as President Joe Biden's decision not to run for reelection added political uncertainty to a market already reeling from weak summer demand for fuel.

US West Texas Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude's front-month contract, August, settled at $79.78 per barrel - down 35 cents, or 0.44%. WTI lost 4% over the course of two prior weeks. In Monday's session, it fell to $77.58 per barrel, a low not seen since early June.

UK-origin Brent crude for September settled at $82.40 per barrel, down 23 cents, or 0.3%. The global crude benchmark fell 4.5% over two prior weeks, hitting a six-week low of $81.61 in the latest session.

Monday's swoon in oil came amid heightened political uncertainty caused by Biden's exit from the reelection race and his decision to endorse Vice President Kamala Harris as the standard bearer for the Democratic Party.

Until Biden's decision on Sunday, markets had been betting on Republican candidate and former President Donald Trump returning to the White House in the November election. With Harris in the race now, the dynamics of the game may have changed, some analysts said.

["Biden's decision] changes the risk calculus … if the Democrats retain the White House," Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy, said in comments carried by MarketWatch.

De Haan said that a win for Democrats would likely mean a generally more prohibitive stance on oil, which would likely keep prices slightly higher. However, a Trump victory would likely mean "fewer restrictions to drilling, environmental regulation, and a more pro-oil stance, which could help ease some price pressure."

With little known so far on how the election might turn, investors in oil were keeping their bets down, thus pressuring crude prices further, De Haan said.

Oil prices have been weighed lately by large builds recently in US fuel stockpiles. The US Energy Information Administration (IEA) reported a gasoline build of 3.328 million barrels for the week that ended July 12, versus the prior week's decline of 2.006 million. Analysts had forecast a decline of 1.7 million barrels instead. Gasoline is the primary motor fuel in the United States and makes up the largest component of the country's energy mix.

In distillates, the EIA reported a build of 3.454 million barrels for last week, negating the prior week's draw of 4.884 million. Analysts had forecast a 500,000-barrel drop. Distillates are primarily processed into the diesel required by trucks, buses and ships, and also for making airplane fuel.

Notwithstanding the increases in fuel stockpiles, the EIA reported a crude inventory decline of 4.87 million barrels during the week ended July 12, adding to the prior week's tumble of 3.443 million. US crude inventories have fallen more than 20 million barrels in all over the past three weeks.

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Also weighing was weaker demand out of China, the No. 1 oil importer and second largest consumer of the commodity after the United States.

Data over the past two weeks showed China's refinery output fell 3.7% in June from a year earlier. China's economy also grew by just 4.7% in the second quarter of this year, its slowest growth since the first quarter of 2023, well below the forecast 5.1%.

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SPUTNIK TOP STORIES OF THE DAY

WASHINGTON, July 23 (Sputnik) –

US ARCTIC STRATEGY

* The Arctic region may experience its first ice-free summer by 2030, the US Defense Department said in its 2024 Arctic Strategy released Monday.

* The United States and its Arctic allies are planning to operate more than 250 advanced multirole combat aircraft by the 2030s that could be deployed for operations in the Arctic region, according to a new US Arctic strategy.

* The US Department of Defense (DoD) will continue to explore new space-based missile-warning and observational systems with greater polar coverage to tackle emerging threats emanating from the Arctic region, according to a new US Arctic strategy.

* The United States will increase ground-based radar data sharing with select Arctic allies to promote the responsible use of space, according to a new US Arctic strategy.

* The Arctic region is becoming a venue for strategic competition between the United States and its adversaries, the US Defense Department said in its 2024 Arctic Strategy.

US-JAPAN 2+2 TALKS

* US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin plan to hold an extended meeting on deterrence with their Japanese counterparts in Tokyo, the State Department said on Monday.

* The US is committed to using all means, including nuclear weapons, to uphold its security treaty commitments with Japan, the State Department said.

BLINKEN'S PLANS FOR ASEAN MEETING

* US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said on Monday that he does not expect Secretary of State Antony Blinken to engage in an unscheduled meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on the sidelines of the ASEAN foreign ministers meeting in Laos later this week.

* Blinken did not consider calling off a major trip to Asia this week following President Joe Biden's withdrawal from the 2024 race, Miller said.

* Blinken is unlikely to meet with any North Korean representatives during the 57th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Laos, the State Department said.

* Blinken will likely speak with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Laos, the site of the 57th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting, the State Department said.

MIDDLE EAST

* The death toll from Israeli shelling of Khan Yunis province in the southern Gaza Strip on

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Monday increased to 70, and more than 200 people were injured, the enclave's health ministry said.

* Yemen's Ansar Allah movement, also known as Houthis, is ready to give Israel a powerful response that will not take long after the recent attacks on the Yemeni port of Hudaydah, Ali Qahum, a member of the political bureau of the movement, told Sputnik.

US PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

* The decision of US President Joe Biden to withdraw from the presidential race does not relate to Russia's internal affairs and cannot be a priority topic for Moscow, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Monday.

* US President Joe Biden in light of his announcement not to seek reelection said that he is dedicated to continuing to prove that the United States is capable of achieving anything it commits to.

* Moscow cannot evaluate the candidacy of US Vice President Kamala Harris for the presidency of the country at the moment, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

TRUMP'S ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

* The US Secret Service (USSS) identified the person who tried to assassinate former President Donald Trump as "suspicious" before Trump took the stage at the rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, USSS Director Kimberly Cheatle said on Monday.

* Cheatle said that she is taking accountability for Trump's assassination attempt and will ensure it doesn't happen again.

* The assassination attempt against Trump is the most significant operational failure by the USSS in decades, Cheatle said.

CONFLICT IN UKRAINE

* Ukraine's statements about its readiness to conduct a dialogue with the Russian side are better than words about its intention to fight "till the last Ukrainian," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Monday.

* Bratislava confirmed that together with Hungary it appealed to the European Commission because Ukraine suspended oil transit from Russia, Slovak Foreign Minister Juraj Blanar said.

* Poland proposed to hold the next EU Foreign Affairs ministerial meeting in Ukraine, but the proposal was rejected, Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski said.

* Ukraine's stoppage of oil transit from Russia to EU countries violates the EU Association Agreement with Kiev, Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto said.

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Nearly Half of US Voters Believe Government Frequently Lies - Poll

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - Nearly half of likely voters in the United States believe that the government lies most or all of the time, according to a Rasmussen Reports poll released Monday.

One-third (33%) of voters believe that government officials lie most of the time and 15% believe that government officials lie all the time, the poll report said.

Moreover, 40% of voters believe that government officials lie some of the time, while just 6%

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believe officials rarely lie and 1% believe they never lie, the poll report said.
A majority of Republican respondents, 56%, believe that government officials lie at least most of the time, compared to 45% of Democrats, the poll report said.
A majority of black respondents, 55%, believe government officials lie at least most of the time, as well as 54% of Hispanic voters and 51% of other minorities, the poll report said. Less than half of white respondents, 46%, believe that the government frequently lies, the poll report said.
A plurality of respondents, 39%, do not trust any of the three branches of the federal government, the poll report said. Twenty-three percent (23%) of voters trust the executive branch the most, 18% trust the judiciary most and 12% trust Congress the most, the poll report said.
The poll surveyed 1,110 likely US voters on July 10-11 and 14. The poll has a margin of error of plus-or-minus three percentage points with a 95% confidence level.

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Israel Ignores UN Resolutions And Peace Initiatives Including Biden's Plan- Nebenzia

UNITED NATIONS, July 22 (Sputnik) - Israel, with the indulgence of Washington, continues to ignore UN resolutions including US President Joe Biden's peace plan, Russian Ambassador to the UN Vassily Nebenzia said on Monday.
"All the while Israel still, with the obvious indulgence of Washington, continues to ignore all Security Council resolutions and any peace initiatives, including the much vaunted Biden plan which exists only on paper," Nebenzia told the UN Security Council during a meeting on Palestine.

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Harris Campaign Raises $81 Million in 24 Hours After Biden Pulls Out - Statement

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - Vice President Kamala Harris' presidential campaign raised $81 million within 24 hours after President Joe Biden dropped out of the race, the Harris presidential campaign wrote on Monday.
"The Harris campaign just announced they have raised $81 million in the last 24 hours," the campaign wrote on X.
On Sunday, Biden said that he would withdraw from the presidential race and endorsed VP Harris as the Democratic Party's nominee for the US presidency. The US presidential election is slated for November 5.

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israel with indulgence of washington continues to ignore all security council resolutions and peace initiatives, including biden's plan - nebenzia

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Suspending Russia From Olympics for Political Reasons Ruins Athletes' Lives - Ex-Champion

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The decision of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to suspend Russia from the upcoming 2024 Olympic Games in Paris for political reasons is ruining the lives of Russian athletes, former Soviet track-and-field champion Andrei Kuznetsov told Sputnik.

"I think this is a tragedy for the athletes. Such political decisions, not related to sports, are ruining their lives," Kuznetsov, who is also a two-time winner of the Boston Marathon, said.

Kuznetsov explained it is very hard for Russian athletes to accept the IOC's decision to suspend their national team because they have devoted a significant part of their professional lives to training and competing in the Olympics and showing the world what they are capable of.

"I feel sorry for the athletes who devote several years of their lives to preparing for the Olympic Games and do not get there for reasons beyond their control. You've been preparing for four, five [or more] years and suddenly they don't let you in, they ban you - it's hard," Kuznetsov said.

The former Soviet champion pointed out that the athletes deny themselves many opportunities because they are devoted to training and spend most of their time trying to reach their maximum.

"When you train, you effectively deny yourself everything," Kuznetsov said.

An athlete who has been banned, like any other individual, cannot change his life quickly as it takes time to enter a new profession and practically start a new life, Kuznetsov added.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said recently Russian athletes themselves will decide whether to obtain a pass to attend the Olympic Games in Paris .

"The athletes make such decisions by themselves," Peskov said. "A number of Russian athletes decided not to attend the Olympic Games and this decision should also be treated with respect."

The Olympic Games in Paris will take place from July 26 to August 11.

Russian athletes have been barred from competing under their national flag and anthem at various international sports events, including the Olympic Games.

The IOC has allowed Russian and Belarusian athletes to participate in Olympic Games in Paris but only under individual neutral status and on condition of complying with a number of criteria. The athletes are required not to be affiliated with their countries' armies and not to have supported Russia's special military operation in Ukraine.

Kuznetsov won the USSR championship in the 10,000 meters (6.2 miles) race in 1985.

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Israel's Netanyahu Requests Meeting With Trump During Visit to US This Week - Reports

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has requested a meeting with Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump during his visit to the United States this week, Politico reported on Monday, citing sources familiar with the matter.

However, it's unclear whether Trump has agreed to meet with Netanyahu, the report added.

Netanyahu was due to arrive in Washington on Monday for meetings with President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and congressional leaders. He will also an address to a joint session of Congress on Wednesday.

The report said a potential meeting between Trump and Netanyahu would take place in Florida later this week after a Trump rally in the state of North Carolina on Thursday.

The report said the Trump campaign and the Israeli Embassy in Washington did not respond to requests for comment on the matter.

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Arctic Region May Have Ice-Free Summer by 2030 - Pentagon

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The Arctic region may experience its first ice-free summer by 2030, the US Defense Department said in its 2024 Arctic Strategy released Monday.

“The Arctic may experience its first practically ice-free summer by 2030, and the loss of sea ice will increase the viability of Arctic maritime transit routes and access to undersea resources,” the strategy said.

Increased human activity in the region will elevate the risk of accidents, miscalculation and environmental degradation, the strategy added.

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US, Allies to Operate Over 250 Advanced Aircraft by 2030 Capable of Arctic Operations

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The United States and its Arctic allies are planning to operate more than 250 advanced multirole combat aircraft by the 2030s that could be deployed for operations in the Arctic region, according to a new US Arctic strategy published by the Department of Defense (DoD) on Monday.

"By the 2030s the United States and our Arctic Allies will operate over 250 advanced multirole combat aircraft that could be deployed for Arctic operations.3 To handle the large amount of data, DoD will explore opportunities, in cooperation with Allies and partners, to improve Arctic data coverage and capacity," the strategy said.

In May, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping signed a joint statement stipulating that Moscow and Beijing would support the preservation of the Arctic as a region of low military and political tensions.

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US to Research New Space Missile Warning Systems to Tackle Threats From Arctic - Strategy

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The US Department of Defense (DoD) will continue to explore new space-based missile-warning and observational systems with greater polar coverage to tackle emerging threats emanating from the Arctic region, according to a new US Arctic strategy unveiled on Monday.

“DoD will also continue to research options for new space-based missile-warning and observational systems with greater polar coverage. Together, these improvements will strengthen our ability to address current and emerging aerospace and maritime threats from and through the Arctic,” the strategy said.

In May, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping signed a joint statement stipulating that Moscow and Beijing would support the preservation of the Arctic as a region of low military and political tensions.

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US to Increase Radar Data Sharing to Promote ‘Responsible Use of Space’ – Arctic Strategy

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The United States will increase ground-based radar data sharing with select Arctic allies to promote the responsible use of space, according to a new US Arctic strategy published by the Department of Defense (DoD) on Monday.

“DoD will take an integrated approach to information sharing and will seek to increase ground-based radar data sharing and expand Space Situational Awareness sharing agreements

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with select Arctic Allies and space faring nations to promote the responsible use of space," the strategy said.

In May, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping signed a joint statement stipulating that Moscow and Beijing support the preservation of the Arctic as a region with low military and political tensions.

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Austin Says New US Arctic Strategy Updated Due to Ukraine Conflict, NATO Expansion

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The need to update the US Arctic strategy was driven by a host of geopolitical changes in recent years, including the conflict in Ukraine, the accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO and the increased cooperation between Russia and China, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said in a memorandum to senior Defense Department leaders on Monday.

"Major geopolitical changes are driving the need for this new strategic approach to the Arctic, including Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the accession of Finland and Sweden to the NATO Alliance, increasing collaboration between the People's Republic of China and Russia, and the accelerating impacts of climate change," the memorandum said.

In May, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping signed a joint statement stipulating that Moscow and Beijing would support the preservation of the Arctic as a region of low military and political tensions.

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Democrats' Strategy to Overthrow Biden's Reelection 'Threat to Democracy' - Vance

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The Democrat strategy to overthrow President Joe Biden's reelection bid is a threat to US democracy, Trump running mate JD Vance said on Monday.

"[Democrats] decided to throw Joe Biden overboard. That is not how it works. That is a threat to democracy," Vance said during a hometown rally in the US state of Ohio.

Vance pointed out that although he does not support Biden or his policies, what the Democratic party did to him is "absolutely disgraceful."

The US senator from Ohio also criticized the Democratic party for waiting until Biden was "political dead weight" after three-and-a-half years before determining he was unfit to serve as US president.

The whole debacle in the Democratic party is an insult to US voters, Vance added.

Over the past several weeks, a growing number of top Democrats called on Biden to suspend his reelection campaign following his dismal performance in the first presidential debate against his Republican rival Donald Trump. Biden withdrew from the election and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris. The Democratic party is expected to pick a nominee for the

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presidential election at its convention in August or sooner.

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US Seeks Peace in Arctic But Prepared to Deploy Joint Force - Pentagon

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The United States seeks peace in the Arctic but is prepared to deploy its joint force to the region, the US Defense Department said in its 2024 Arctic Strategy on Monday.

The strategy aligns with and nests under the 2022 National Security Strategy, the 2022 National Defense Strategy and the 2022 National Strategy for the Arctic Region.

"The [2022 National Strategy for the Arctic Region] states that the United States seeks an Arctic region that is peaceful, stable, prosperous, and cooperative," the new Defense Department strategy said.

Activities in the Arctic will be calibrated to reflect a "monitor-and-respond" approach underpinned by the deterrent value of the Defense Department's ability to deploy the joint force globally at the time and place of its choosing, the strategy also said.

The United States will exercise presence in the Arctic by training both independently and alongside allies and partners to demonstrate interoperability and credible joint capabilities, the strategy added.

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Arctic Becoming Area for Strategic Competition, US Must Plan to Meet Challenge - Pentagon

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The Arctic region is becoming a venue for strategic competition between the United States and its adversaries, the US Defense Department said on Monday in its 2024 Arctic Strategy.

“This increasingly accessible region is becoming a venue for strategic competition, and the United States must stand ready to meet the challenge alongside Allies and partners,” the strategy said.

The strategy directs the Defense Department to enhance its Arctic capabilities, bolster engagement with allies and partners, and exercise forces to develop readiness for operations at high latitudes.

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Us to research new space-based missile-warning and observational systems with greater polar coverage to tackle threats from, through Arctic - strategy

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Pentagon says growing russia-china alignment in arctic is of concern, continues to monitor this cooperation

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pentagon says it seeks peaceful Arctic, but does not rule out ability to deploy Joint Force at time and place of choosing – strategy

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Pentagon updates Arctic strategy citing need for changes due to Ukraine conflict, nato expansion into Finland and Sweden, russia-prc cooperation

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US Congressman Says Introduced Resolution Calling on Biden to Fire Secret Service Chief

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - US Congressman Nick Langworthy said on Monday that he introduced a resolution to the House of Representatives to urge President Joe Biden to fire US Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle, following an assassination attempt against former President Donald Trump.

"I've introduced a resolution here to this body, that hopefully will get a vote this week, calling on the president to fire you," Langworthy said during a US House Oversight Committee hearing with Cheatle.

On July 13, a gunman attempted to assassinate Trump during a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, shooting him in the right ear, killing one audience member and wounding two others.

Cheatle said that the incident was an operational failure by the Secret Service that could have been prevented. Some lawmakers have called on Cheatle to resign in the wake of the assassination attempt, but she has indicated her intention to remain in her leadership role.

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Biden Refusal to Campaign Forced After Democrat Leaders Turn Away From Him - Commentator

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WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden's decision not to continue his campaign was forced after major leaders and donors of the Democratic party turned away from him, US conservative political commentator Lev Alburt told Sputnik.

"Biden's refusal to continue campaigning became forced a week ago, when all the main Democratic leaders and, importantly, their donor friends abandoned him," Alburt said.

On Sunday, Biden announced that he withdrew from the 2024 US presidential election after he decided it was in the best interest of the Democratic party and that of the United States. Biden endorsed in a separate statement Vice President Kamala Harris to be the Democratic party's nominee for US president, which she accepted.

Alburt said the election victory for Trump and the Republicans is "almost guaranteed" and Biden's decision would change little, if anything, in the race.

Alburt also said that Trump's selection of US Senator JD Vance as a running mate is very important and very good for Russia.

Vance has always supported the normalization of relations with Russia, Alburt added.

Alburt is a conservative political commentator in New York City. He was born in the former Soviet Union and emigrated to the United States in 1977. Alburt is also a renowned chess grand master.

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Biden's COVID-19 Symptoms Have 'Almost Resolved Completely' - White House Physician

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden's COVID-19 symptoms have almost completely resolved after he took the prescribed medication, White House physician Dr. Kevin O'Connor said on Monday.

"President Biden completed his tenth dose of Paxlovid this morning. His symptoms have almost resolved completely," O'Connor said in a letter to White House spokesperson Karine Jeann-Pierre.

Biden has been resting in his Delaware residence since he tested positive for COVID-19 last week.

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US House Lawmaker Introduces Resolution Calling for Secret Service Director's Firing Over Trump Assassination Attempt

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biden's covid symptoms have almost resolved completely - white house physician

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US Congresswoman Boebert Demands Proof of Life from Biden by 5PM Today

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - US Congresswoman Lauren Boebert said on Monday that she is demanding proof of life from US President Joe Biden by 5pm today.

"I demand proof of life from Joe Biden today by 5:00pm. He needs to get in front of some camera and discuss if he's aware that he dropped out," Boebert said on X.

Last Wednesday, the White House said Biden had come down with Covid-19 while campaigning in the state of Nevada. He is currently recovering at his Delaware residence under self-imposed isolation.

"Hiding is completely unacceptable," Boebert added.

Biden on Sunday announced that he would not seek a second term as US president and endorsed the candidacy of Vice President Kamala Harris.

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State Dept. Does Not Expect Blinken to Meet With Lavrov on Sidelines of ASEAN Ministerial

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said on Monday that he does not expect Secretary of State Antony Blinken to engage in an unscheduled meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on the sidelines of the ASEAN foreign ministers meeting in Laos later this week.

"I do not," Miller said when asked if he expects Blinken to meet Lavrov on the sidelines of the ASEAN summit this week.

The ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting is scheduled to take place in Vientiane between July 21 and July 27.

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US Secret Service Chief Says Apologized to Trump for Failure to Stop Assassination Attempt

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - US Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle said on Monday that she personally apologized to former US President Donald Trump for the Secret Service's failure to prevent an assassination attempt against him.

"Yes I did," Cheatle said during a US House Oversight Committee hearing, in response to a question about whether she directly apologized to Trump for the incident.

On July 13, a gunman attempted to assassinate Trump at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania, shooting him in the right ear, killing one audience member and wounding two others.

Cheatle said that the incident was an operational failure by the Secret Service that could have been prevented.

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Blinken Did Not Consider Calling Off Trip to Asia After Biden's Announcement – State Dept.

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) – US Secretary of State Antony Blinken did not consider calling off a major trip to Asia this week following President Joe Biden's withdrawal from the 2024 race, State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said on Monday.

"No, we didn't in no way consider canceling the trip," Miller said during a press briefing.

On Sunday, Biden announced that he dropped out of the 2024 US election after he decided it was in the best interest of the Democratic party and the United States. He endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris to be the Democratic party's nominee for US president.

Blinken is expected to travel to Vietnam, Laos, Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, and Mongolia from July 24 to August 3, 2024. He will hold a series of bilateral meetings, including with his Chinese counterpart Foreign Minister Wang Yi, and take part in the ASEAN-U.S. Post Ministerial Conference.

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Ex-House Speaker Pelosi Endorses Harris to Be Democratic Nominee for President

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in a statement on Monday endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris to be the Democratic nominee for the 2024 presidential election.

On Sunday, President Joe Biden announced that he dropped out of the 2024 US election after he decided it was in the best interest of the Democratic party and the United States. He endorsed Harris to be the Democratic party's nominee for US president, which she accepted.

"Today, it is with immense pride and limitless optimism for our country's future that I endorse Vice President Kamala Harris for President of the United States," Pelosi said. "My enthusiastic support for Kamala Harris for President is official, personal, and political."

Pelosi added that she has "full confidence" that Harris will lead the Democratic party to victory in November.

There were growing calls among top Democrats for Biden to suspend his reelection campaign following his poor performance in the first presidential debate against his Republican rival Donald Trump last month. The Democratic party will pick a nominee for the presidential election at its convention in August or sooner.

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Biden in Lame Duck Session, Not Expected to Make Gains on Foreign Issues - Ex-US Officials

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - President Joe Biden after announcing he will not seek reelection thereby making himself a lame duck president and is not expected to make any meaningful gains on foreign-related issues such as Ukraine, former White House National Security Council Director for European and Eurasian Affairs Hope Harrison told Sputnik on Monday.

"I don't expect much from the rest of Biden's term," Harrison said. "He is now a lame duck, as we say in English. Everyone in the world - Ukraine, Russia, Israel, etc. - will now be focused on who the next president will be. Nothing agreed to by Biden will be expected to hold necessarily."

Former US National Intelligence Council chairman Gregory Treverton told Sputnik he also doesn't expect much to change in Ukraine following Biden's decision but added that maybe he could make progress towards stabilizing the Middle East.

"I don't think Biden's decision will affect Ukraine, for Putin has every incentive to wait," Treverton said. "But it ought to leave Biden more time and ability to try and make peace in Gaza and the greater Middle East."

On Sunday, Biden announced that he dropped out of the 2024 US election after he decided it was in the best interest of the Democratic party and the United States. He endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris to be the Democratic party's nominee for US president.

There were growing calls among top Democrats for Biden to suspend his reelection campaign following his poor performance in the first presidential debate against his Republican rival Donald Trump last month. The Democratic party will pick a nominee for the presidential election at its convention in August or sooner.

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ANALYSIS - Kamala Harris, Jill Biden on Collision Course at Democratic Convention, Paris Olympics

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - Vice President Kamala Harris and First Lady Jill Biden are on a double collision course over whether and when President Joe Biden may leave office, given the question of who will be the Democratic Party's candidate in the November 2024 election and who will lead the US delegation to the Olympic Games in Paris, analysts told Sputnik.

Biden announced on Sunday that he was ending his bid to run for a second four-year presidential term in November and separately endorsed Harris as his successor. However, Biden said he would remain president for the remainder of his term. Widespread reports in the US media suggest that Harris has negligible support among Democratic party leaders or rank-and-file members as well as among supporters.

Biden also announced he had contracted COVID-19 but only after his disastrous performance against Republican challenger Donald Trump in their presidential debate earlier this month when demands to withdraw from the election and resign from office grew louder. Even the usually very supportive US corporate media has raised skepticism that Biden, 81, is not

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cognitively and physically up to perform his duties.

HARRIS-BIDEN RIFT

Political analyst Chares Ortel said Republican leaders in both chambers of Congress were already discussing invoking the 25th Amendment and pressing for Biden to stand down completely and immediately from the Oval Office given the logic that if he is not able to campaign due to cognitive and physical deficiencies, he is also not able to perform his duties as president.

"[US House Speaker] Mike Johnson, Senator Josh Hawley and others quickly noted that Biden should resign the Presidency or face removal under the 25th Amendment as he clearly is unfit to carry out his full set of duties," Ortel said.

Jill Biden will also want her husband to stay in power at least for the next month because she is determined to lead the US delegation to the Olympic Games in person, Ortel said.

"Perhaps Jill Biden will carry through with her plan to lead the American delegation to the Paris Olympics. But the Bidens will not remain much longer as occupants of the White House," Ortel said.

However, Harris would be determined to preside over anticipated American glory at the Olympics instead of Jill Biden, he said.

"Kamala Harris (and her backers) will want the pageantry and records [at the Paris Olympics] set by her succession," Ortel said.

LAME DUCK LEADER

However, even if Harris took over quickly, she would widely be seen as a lame duck leader with no significant power base of her own and no control over the open convention that will convene in Chicago later next month, Ortel pointed out.

"Democrats will then struggle to select and win confirmation in the House and Senate for her [Harris's] choice to be Vice President," Ortel said.

The Democrats will be incapable of keeping their convention united and orderly to impress and reassure the American people, he said.

"Only after all this, will the convention open in Chicago, a city already in chaos at a particularly hot and unpleasant time of the year," Ortel said.

Harris's mediocre record as vice president does not bode well for her coming interregnum as his successor, Ortel added.

CRIPPLING HANDICAPS

Economic analyst and columnist Alan Tonelson agreed that Biden, who had fought hard to keep his campaign going, had delayed his withdrawal announcement until a moment that has caused maximum confusion and embarrassment for his Democratic party.

"The Biden withdrawal with only a month left before his party's nominating convention looks like a major net minus for the Democrats," Tonelson said.

Biden's late announcement guaranteed that whomever the convention chose to succeed him would start their campaign late and under crippling handicaps, he said.

"No matter who ultimately wins the Democratic crown, they're unavoidably conveying to the electorate the message that even though they're in complete confusion about their standard-bearer this late in the campaign, they can be trusted to run the country," Tonelson said.

The only hope that the Democrats now had was that Trump would say something embarrassing or disastrous to discredit himself at the last moment, he said.

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"Trump remains such an erratic figure that it's entirely conceivable that he could snatch defeat from the jaws of likely victory. But that possibility seems to be the Democrats' only real hope of retaining the White House," Tonelson added.

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Nearly Half Canadians $145 Away From Failing to Meeting Financial Obligations – Poll

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) – Nearly half Canadians are C$200 (US$145) or less away from failing to fulfill their financial obligations, the latest MNP Consumer Debt Index conducted by the polling agency Ipsos showed on Monday.

The MNP Consumer Debt Index dropped to 85 points, marking a 6-point decrease from the previous quarter and demonstrating Canadians' pessimism toward their debt situation.

"Consistent with last quarter, 46% of Canadians are $200 or less away from failing to meet all their financial obligations. However, there is a shift among those who were close to insolvency and already not making enough to cover their bills. 29% of Canadians say they already can't cover their bills and debt payments, a decrease of 2 points, and those who are $1 to $200 away from insolvency has increased by 3 points," Ipsos said.

The poll also found that Canadians are increasingly worried about being unable to absorb additional interest rate increases as they are unprepared to face heightened financial challenges.

Accordingly, 57% believe they would be in financial trouble in the event of a significant hike, whereas two-thirds said they "desperately need" interest rates to further decrease. Close to half (47%) would still be concerned about their ability to remain solvent if rates decreased.

In June, the Central Bank of Canada lowered its overnight rate from 5% to 4.75%, marking the first reduction since 2020. The next rate announcement is scheduled for July 24.

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Kennedy Discusses Potential Administration Role With Trump - Reports

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - Independent US presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. discussed a potential administration role with Republican nominee Donald Trump, The Washington Post reported on Monday.

Kennedy discussed taking a job in a potential second Trump administration, as well as potentially endorsing the former president, the report said, citing four people familiar with the matter.

Kennedy's role in the Trump administration would focus on health and medical issues, the report said.

However, the talks between Kennedy and Trump did not end in an agreement, due to concerns about promising an administration role in exchange for an endorsement, the report said.

Last week, Kennedy and Trump also discussed national unity, following an assassination

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attempt against Trump, but Kennedy does not intend to drop out of the 2024 presidential race, his campaign said.

The assassination attempt prompted Trump to call on the Biden administration to provide US Secret Service protection to Kennedy, which they had previously denied him.

US Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas later said that US President Joe Biden directed him to work with the Secret Service to protect Kennedy.

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US Could Use Nuclear Weapons to Uphold Japan Security Commitments - State Dept.

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) – The US is committed to using all means, including nuclear weapons, to uphold its security treaty commitments with Japan, the State Department said on Monday.

"Our security treaty commitments to our Japanese allies are iron-clad, and we're committed to using all means at America's disposal, including nuclear, to make sure that we meet those commitments," Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Kritenbrink said at a press briefing previewing Blinken's trip to the Asia-Pacific region.

"In the face of growing unprecedented threats in the region, the United States and Japan are going to demonstrate in a responsible way how we will stand up and ensure not just the defense of Japan, but also our contribution to regional security," he noted.

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Blinken, Austin to Hold Extended Deterrence Talks with Japanese Counterparts – State Dept.

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) – US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin plan to hold an extended meeting on deterrence with their Japanese counterparts in Tokyo, the State Department said on Monday.

"Secretary Blinken and Secretary Austin will also hold an extended deterrence ministerial meeting with Foreign Minister Kamikawa and Defense Minister Kihara," Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Kritenbrink said at a press briefing previewing Blinken's trip to the Asia-Pacific region.

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Blinken Unlikely to Meet With North Korean Officials at ASEAN Meeting – State Dept.

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) – US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is unlikely to meet with any North Korean representatives during the 57th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Laos, the State Department said on Monday.

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"I would expect that there will be a North Korean representative…I do not anticipate a meeting between the Secretary and whoever that representative will be," Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Kritenbrink said at a press briefing previewing Blinken's trip to the Asia-Pacific region.

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Blinken Likely to Speak With Chinese Foreign Minister in Laos – State Dept.

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) – US Secretary of State Antony Blinken will likely speak with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Laos, the site of the 57th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting, the State Department said on Monday.

"When he travels to the region, especially for these multilateral events, we do anticipate that he'll have an opportunity to engage with Wang Yi and we'll have more details to announce on that as we get closer to the stop," Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Kritenbrink said at a press briefing previewing Blinken's trip to the Asia-Pacific region.

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Blinken Embarks on Big Trip to Asia, Including for ASEAN Ministerial Meeting – State Dept.

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) – US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is heading to Asia later this week to take part in a ministerial meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Vientiane, Laos with stops in Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, and Mongolia, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Kritenbrink announced on Monday.

While Japan and the Philippines will be the highlight of the trip, Blinken will also demonstrate the "dramatic strengthening" of US relations with Quad partners, including Australia, India, and Japan, Kritenbrink said during a press briefing.

In Laos, Blinken will participate in the 57 ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting and related meetings, including the ASEAN-US foreign ministerial, East Asia Summit, and the ASEAN Regional Forum, according to Kritenbrink.

The ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting is scheduled to take place in Vientiane between July 21 and July 27.

In Tokyo, Blinken and US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin will focus on the implementation of key outcomes from Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's visit to the United States in April. Kritenbrink said the two US officials would meet with Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa and Japanese Defense Minister Minoru Kihara for a "2+2" dialogue.

As the US commitment to Japanese security remains ironclad, Washington is ready to use all means at its disposal, including nuclear, to make sure that it meets those commitments, Kritenbrink pointed out.

The assistant secretary added that Blinken and Austin will also hold an extended ministerial

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deterrence meeting with Kamikawa and Kihara.

Also in Tokyo, Blinken will join his Australian, Indian, and Japanese counterparts for the Quad foreign ministers' meeting, according to Kritenbrink.

In Manila, Blinken and Austin will meet with Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo and National Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. for the first ever "2+2" ministerial dialogue, Kritenbrink said.

Blinken and Austin will also meet with Philippine President Bongbong to explore additional ways to capitalize on the unprecedented momentum in the US-Philippines alliance, Kritenbrink added.

In Singapore, Blinken will meet with Prime Minister Lawrence Wong, Senior Minister Lee Hsien Loong, and Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan to review the growth of bilateral cooperation on shared security, economic, climate, and technology objectives, Kritenbrink said.

Blinken will co-chair the second round of the US-Singapore critical and emerging technologies dialogue where the two sides will discuss measures to reduce barriers to innovation and increased collaboration, according to Kritenbrink.

The last stop for Blinken will be in Mongolia, where the top US diplomat will have a chance to meet with the country's Foreign Minister Battsetseg Batmunkh to follow up on their first-ever US-Mongolia comprehensive strategic dialogue, which will be held in Washington on Tuesday, Kritenbrink noted.

Kritenbrink said that Blinken will have an opportunity to meet with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Laos but is unlikely to have any encounter with North Korean officials at the ASEAN meeting.

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blinken, Austin to hold extended deterrence ministerial meeting with Japanese counterparts in Tokyo - state department

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us state department says anticipates that blinken will have opportunity to engage with his Chinese counterpart wang yi in Laos

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Disneyland Workers Authorize Strike Vote Over Unfair Labor Practices - Statement

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - Disneyland Park cast members voted 99% in favor of authorizing a strike to protest unfair labor practices, demonstrating their resolve against intimidation and unlawful discipline, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) Local 324 said in a statement.

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"Disneyland Park cast members made their voices heard by voting to authorize the Disney Workers Rising bargaining committee to call for a strike to protest unfair labor practices by 99%. We stood up and showed Disney that we won't sit by and allow them to intimidate, surveil, and unlawfully discipline cast members for exercising their rights," the statement said.

According to a statement on April 24, Disneyland's 14,000-member bargaining unit, including custodians, ride operators, candy makers, and merchandise clerks, entered negotiations with Disney, seeking fair wages, attendance policies, seniority increases, and safe parks.

In June, they filed charges against Disney for unlawful discipline, intimidation, and surveillance of over 675 union members wearing union buttons, which are under investigation by the National Labor Relations Board, the statement read.

"This does not mean we are on strike. This vote simply allows us to take action if Disney continues to silence cast members and prevent us from getting the contract we deserve," the statement said.

The statement added that meetings with Disney are set for July 22 and 23, and if no agreement is reached, they will take further action to secure the contract.

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Western Sanctions Have 'Significant Impact' on UN Activities in Syria - Russian Envoy

UNITED NATIONS, July 22 (Sputnik) - Sanctions imposed by Western countries on Syria have had a significant negative impact on UN humanitarian efforts there as well as on the socio-economic situation in the country, Russian Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations Dmitry Polyanskiy said on Monday.

"Despite the occasionally vague narration and conclusions that continue to remain timid, the authors nonetheless make it clear the significant impact that the sanctions are having on the humanitarian activities of UN agencies and the socio-economic situation in the country," Polyanskiy said during a UN Security Council meeting on Syria.

Polyanskiy pointed out that the vast majority of Syrians, or more than 90% of them, are feeling the negative effect of the Western sanctions.

Russia has repeatedly said that the Syrian people should determine the next venue to move forward and organize a constitutional committee given that Switzerland has lost its status as a neutral country after imposing sanctions on Syria and Russia.

Syria has been in a state of conflict since 2011 after the US-led collective West tried to topple the government of Syrian President Bashar Assad and supported opposition groups that include various extremist and terrorist elements. Some of Syria's oil wells are controlled by US troops, which have been in the country illegally since 2016 under the pretext of fighting terrorists and their allied militants.

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US Secret Service Director Says Trump Assassination Attempt 'Failure' by Agency

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The assassination attempt against former President Donald Trump is the most significant operational failure by the US Secret Service (USSS) in decades, USSS Director Kimberly Cheatle said on Monday.

"The assassination attempt of former president Donald Trump on July 13 is the most significant operational failure of the Secret Service in decades," Cheatle said during a US House Oversight Committee hearing.

Cheatle said that she takes full responsibility for any security lapses as the director of the USSS.

The USSS is fully cooperating with ongoing investigations into the incident, Cheatle added.

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Two US B-52H Stratofortress Strategic Bombers Arrive in Romania for First Time - NATO

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - Two US B-52H Stratofortress strategic bombers arrived at an air base in Romania and will operate near the Black Sea, the NATO Allied Air Command said on Monday.

"Two US Air Force B-52Hs aircraft assigned to the 2nd Bomb Wing, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, arrived at Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base, Romania, for Bomber Task Force 24-4, Sunday, July 21," the Allied Air Command said in a press release.

Two Russian aircraft safely intercepted the bombers over the Barents Sea, which did not change the bombers' course and continued their trip to Romania without incident, the release added.

On Sunday, the Russian Defense Ministry said it scrambled MiG-29 and MiG-31fighter jets to chase the pair of US Air Force B-52 bombers away from the Russian border over the Barents Sea.

The Russian fighter jets carried out the mission in strict accordance with international rules for the use of airspace over neutral waters and in compliance with security measures, the Russian Defense Ministry added.

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Бывший американский чиновник не исключил новых попыток покушения на Трампа

ВАШИНГТОН, 22 июл - РИА Новости. Существует вероятность новых покушений на бывшего президента США Дональда Трамп из-за его высказываний, в том числе касающихся отношений с Россией, заявил РИА Новости бывший помощник министра финансов в администрации Рональда Рейгана Пол Крейг Робертс.

"Я ожидаю, что будут еще покушения на жизнь Трампа", - заявил Робертс.

Он отметил, что Трамп представляет угрозу для так называемого "глубинного

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государства", то есть якобы теневой правящей элиты США.

"Когда он заявил, что намерен нормализовать отношения с Россией (в 2016 году - ред.), Трамп поставил под угрозу бюджет и мощь военно-силового комплекса, которому Россия нужна как враг. Директор ЦРУ (на тот момент – ред.) Джон Бреннан объявил Трампа "предателем Америки". Это заставило правящий истеблишмент работать против Трампа", - отметил Робертс.

Как утверждает бывший чиновник, поскольку уголовные дела против Трампа не сработали и скорее усилили поддержку Трампа среди населения, теневой истеблишмент решил избавиться от Трампа посредством покушения. Однако и попытка покушения теперь увеличила симпатии населения к республиканскому кандидату, добавил он.

Опрос телеканала ABC и компании Ipsos 21 июля показал, что рейтинг Трампа вырос до 40% с момента попытки покушения, что стало рекордным показателем с 2020 года.

На предвыборном выступлении Трампа в Пенсильвании 13 июля произошла стрельба, экс-президент был ранен в ухо, погиб один из зрителей, еще двое получили критические ранения. Секретная служба США сообщила, что ликвидировала подозреваемого, который несколько раз выстрелил в сторону сцены. Сообщалось, что он прятался на крыше производственного здания примерно в 100 метрах от сцены, вне территории, где проводилось мероприятие.

Министерство внутренней безопасности (МВБ) США 17 июля заявило, что проведет расследование работы секретной службы по обеспечению охраны Дональда Трампа во время его предвыборного митинга. ФБР расследует инцидент как "попытку покушения и возможный внутренний терроризм". По информации ФБР, подозреваемый - 20-летний Томас Мэтью Крукс.

В понедельник глава секретной службы США Кимберли Читл признала, что попытка покушения на Трампа стала самым большим провалом в истории ведомства.

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Congressional Candidate Says Dems Undermine Claims to Protect Democracy By 'Ousting' Biden

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The Democratic party contradicts its claims that it wants to protect democracy by forcing President Joe Biden to suspend his reelection campaign and denying the millions of votes that elected him to be the Democratic presidential nominee during the primaries, US congressional candidate Daniel Butierez told Sputnik on Monday.

On Sunday, Biden announced that he was dropping out of the 2024 US election after he decided it was in the best interest of the Democratic party and the United States. He endorsed his Vice President Kamala Harris to be the Democratic party's nominee for US president, which she accepted.

"I think it’s insane that the party claiming to want to protect democracy just denied millions of their own base democracy," Butierez, a Republican, said.

Butierez is running for election to the US House of Representatives to represent Arizona's 7th congressional district.

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US Congressman Paul Gosar's office in a statement to Sputnik said Biden's decision to withdraw from the presidential race was the result of a political "coup" the Democratic party had organized against the US president.

There were growing calls among top Democrats for Biden to suspend his reelection campaign following his poor performance in the first presidential debate against his Republican rival Donald Trump last month. The Democratic party will pick a nominee for the presidential election at its convention in August or sooner.

Trump in response to Biden's decision said his former rival was never fit to serve as US president, adding that the country has suffered greatly because of his presidency.

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US Secret Service Director Says Trump Assassination Attempt 'Preventable'

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The assassination attempt against former US President Donald Trump was preventable, US Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle said on Monday.

On July 13, a gunman attempted to assassinate Trump during a campaign rally in Pennsylvania, shooting him in the right ear, killing one audience member and wounding two others.

"Yes," Cheatle said during a US House Oversight Committee hearing, in response to a question about whether the incident was preventable.

Cheatle said that the incident was an operational failure by the Secret Service.

Some lawmakers have called on Cheatle to resign from her leadership role, but she has indicated that she intends to remain in her position.

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Harris During First Event Since Announcing Nomination Bid Says Biden Recovering from Covid

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden is recovering from COVID-19 and is feeling much better, Vice President Kamala Harris said on Monday.

"[President Biden is] feeling much better and recovering fast, and he looks forward to getting back on the road," said Harris during her first official event since announcing her intent to seek the Democratic nomination.

Last Wednesday it was reported that Biden had come down with Covid-19 while traveling in the state of Nevada. He is currently recovering at his Delaware residence.

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harris says biden recovering from covid, feeling much better

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Biden After Dropping Out of Election Says Will Continue Proving US Can Do Anything

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) -US President Joe Biden in light of his announcement not to seek reelection said on Monday that he is dedicated to continuing to prove that the United States is capable of achieving anything it commits to.

"We are the United States of America – there's nothing we can't do if we do it together," Biden said in a statement via X. "We just have to remember who we are. I've dedicated my presidency to proving that, and I'll continue to do so today, tomorrow, and every day that I have the honor of being your president."

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US Secret Service Director Says 'Taking Accountability' for Trump Assassination Attempt

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - USSS Director Kimberly Cheatle said on Monday that she is taking accountability for Former President Donald Trump's assassination attempt and will ensure it doesn't happen again.

"I am taking accountability, and I will continue to take accountability. I am responsible for leading the agency and I am responsible for finding the answers to how this event occurred, and making sure that it doesn't happen again," Cheatle said during a US House Oversight Committee hearing.

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US Secret Service Identified Gunman as 'Suspicious' Before Trump Took Stage - Director

(Updates with more details, background in paras 5-7)

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The US Secret Service (USSS) identified the person who tried to assassinate former President Donald Trump as "suspicious" before Trump took the stage at the campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, USSS Director Kimberly Cheatle said on Monday.

"The individual was identified as suspicious," Cheatle said during a US House Oversight Committee hearing.

When asked to clarify whether the individual was identified as suspicious before Trump took the stage and why he was allowed to go out, Cheatle said, "That is the information I've received."

"If the detail had passed information that there was a threat, the detail would never have brought the former president out on to stage," Cheatle added.

Security personnel did not know that the shooter had a gun before Trump got on stage, Cheatle

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said.
On July 13, a gunman attempted to assassinate Trump at the campaign rally in Pennsylvania, shooting him in the right ear, killing one audience member and wounding two others.
Some lawmakers have called on Cheatle to resign from her leadership role in the wake of the incident, although she has said that she intends to remain in her position.

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us secret service director says she is taking accountability for trump assassination attempt, making sure it does not happen again

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US Will Work With Any South Sudan Leader Who Prioritizes Needs of People - White House

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The United States is ready to work with any South Sudanese leader who will prioritize the needs of the people and seek solution to the multiple challenges facing the country, Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs on the White House National Security Council Josh Black said on Monday.
"Let me be clear: the US will always be a friend of the people of South Sudan and a partner for peace in the country. We will work with any South Sudanese leader who prioritizes the needs of the people, commits to the transparent and democratic government, and seeks to tackle South Sudan's many political, economic, institutional, and environmental challenges," Black said.
Many parties and leaders are responsible for the situation in South Sudan, but failure to find a political solution would be their collective problem, Black said.
"If this country has no elections in a reasonable timeframe, or if it has bad elections without necessary conditions achieved, then there is a major risk of a new crisis and a new violence," Black added.
The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned recently that South Sudan is facing a growing humanitarian risk due to multiple issues, including the ongoing conflict in neighboring Sudan.

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US Secret Service Identified Gunman as 'Suspicious' Before Trump Took Stage - Director

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The US Secret Service (USSS) identified the person who tried to assassinate former President Donald Trump as "suspicious" before Trump took the stage at the rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, USSS Director Kimberly Cheatle said on Monday.

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"The individual was identified as suspicious," Cheatle said during a US House Oversight Committee hearing.

When asked to clarify whether the individual was identified as suspicious before Trump took to the stage and why then he was allowed to go on, Cheatle said, "That is the information I've received."

"If the detail had passed information that there was a threat, the detail would never have brought the former president out on to stage," Cheatle added.

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Freeland to Attend G7, G20 Finance Ministers Meetings in Brazil July 24-26 - Finance Dept.

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - Canadian Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland will participate in the Group of Seven (G7) and Group of 20 (G20) Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting in Brazil later this week, the Department of Finance said on Monday.

"This week, from July 24 to 26, the Honorable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, will attend meetings of G7 and G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil," the department said in a statement.

Freeland will advance efforts with Canada's allies to enhance the resiliency of global supply chains and create economic growth, the statement said.

Freeland is also set to discuss Russia's ongoing special military operation in Ukraine and efforts to make full use of Russian frozen assets, the statement said.

Moreover, she will work with allies and partners to operationalize the Extraordinary Revenue Acceleration Loans that would provide close to $50 billion in support Kiev.

In mid-June, the G7 countries agreed on a loan structure to provide at least $50 billion to Ukraine by utilizing revenues generated from interest on Russia's frozen assets.

After the start of Russia's military operation in Ukraine in February 2022, the G7 froze Russian foreign currency reserves amounting to about 300 billion euros ($325 billion). Moscow has maintained that any attempts to confiscate Russian assets amount to theft and a violation of international law.

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URGENT: US Secret Service Director Says Trump Assassination Attempt 'Failure' by Agency

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - The assassination attempt against former President Donald Trump is the most significant operational failure by the US Secret Service (USSS) in decades, USSS Director Kimberly Cheatle said on Monday.

"The assassination attempt of former president Donald Trump on July 13 is the most significant operational failure of the Secret Service in decades," Cheatle said during a US House Oversight Committee hearing.

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Cheatle said that she takes full responsibility for any security lapses as the director of the USSS.

The USSS is fully cooperating with ongoing investigations into the incident, Cheatle added.

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US Senator Publishes First Findings of Probe Into July 13 Assassination Attempt on Trump

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) – Senator Ron Johnson on Monday published his preliminary findings of a probe into the actions of law enforcement agencies and the US Secret Service related to the assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump earlier this month.

"On Sunday, U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) released preliminary findings relating to the assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump during his July 13, 2024 campaign rally in Butler, PA," the senator's office said in a press release.

According to the findings, the Secret Service did not attend a security briefing provided to local special weapons and tactics (SWAT) and sniper teams on the morning of July 13.

Local law enforcement officials were also dissatisfied with the frequency and quality of their communications with the Secret Service, the release said.

The Secret Service did receive a notification about Thomas Crooks from the local law enforcement command ahead of the shooting, the release added.

The preliminary probe also found that the Secret Service was not initially going to send snipers to the rally.

The shooting took place on July 13 at a Trump rally in Butler, the US state of Pennsylvania. Trump sustained a gun wound to his right ear and was briefly hospitalized. Thomas Crooks, 20, killed a member of the audience and injured two others in the crowd before the Secret Service neutralized him. The FBI is investigating the incident as an assassination attempt and potential domestic terrorism.

Following the incident, the US Secret Service said it had adjusted Trump's security detail since Saturday's assassination attempt on the Republican presidential frontrunner to ensure his protection for the remainder of his campaign.

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Comer Says Questions Whether Any US Officials Safe Under Secret Service Chief's Leadership

WASHINGTON, July 22 (Sputnik) - US House Oversight Committee Chairman James Comer said on Monday that he questions whether any US official with a Secret Service (USSS) protective detail is safe under the leadership of USSS Director Kimberly Cheatle.

"Under Director Cheatle's leadership, we question whether anyone is safe – not President Biden, not the First Lady, not the White House, and certainly not the presidential candidates," Comer said in opening remarks at a hearing with Cheatle.

Cheatle is attending a hearing with the Oversight panel on Monday to answer questions about

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an assassination attempt against former President Donald Trump earlier this month. Some lawmakers have called on Cheatle to resign in the wake of the incident, although Cheatle has said that she intends to continue serving in the leadership role.

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us secret service director says 'we failed' on july 13, takes full responsibility for any security lapse of agency

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