

9/10/24 Tuesday

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Germany's New Border Crackdown Leaves Neighbors Dismayed

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz vowed to strengthen deportation laws following a deadly mass stabbing in the western city of Solingen, during which a suspected Islamic extremist killed three people and injured eight others at a street festival. The suspect had his asylum application rejected, and was supposed to be deported from Germany last year.

In the wake of a violent knife attack and elections which saw Germany's far-right party make electoral strides, the European country's government has decided to impose temporary border restrictions which they hope will control irregular migration. Interior Minister Nancy Faeser announced such plans on Monday and said they would be put those policies into effect beginning on September 16.

The interior minister added that police are to check whether or not an asylum seeker has already sought protection in another EU country, and that the policy will allow local authorities to directly turn away migrants at borders.

Germany will tighten controls at all nine of its land borders which are typically open under the European Schengen zone. This will include borders that are shared with France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark, [Al Jazeera](#) reported. The new policy will also tighten border restrictions which are already in place for Austria, the Czech Republic, Poland and Switzerland.

George Szamuely, an author and senior research fellow at the Global Policy Institute, joined [The Final Countdown](#) on Tuesday and analyzed the ongoing tensions at Germany's borders.

"...this migrant problem is Europe-wide: France, Italy, and the UK. Germany is a particular case because, of course, Germany is the richest country in Europe. It also has one of the most generous welfare systems in Europe. So, all of the migrants that actually come into Europe tend to head towards Germany. And so, that's what Germany is trying to crack down on," Szamuely explained.

"...the migrants who register for asylum in Bulgaria, however, using the Schengen system in Europe, then head towards Germany and then apply for welfare payments in Germany. And, this is really causing a great deal of consternation in Germany, not just because of the enormous burden on the German economy, but because of these scenes of violence," he added.

Germany's right-wing party, the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) received an unprecedented number of votes earlier this month, pushing the party to second place behind the conservative Christian Democratic Union party (CDU) in Saxony with 30.6% of the vote. And in Thuringia, the AfD won its first German regional election by almost 10 points with 32.8% of the vote, and was followed by the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) which secured 23.6% of the votes according to exit polls.

Following this recent win by the far-right party, current polls show that the AfD's success most likely won't slow down. The [BBC](#) reported that the party could take a majority of the votes in Brandenburg state's election - sharply followed by the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) - which will occur in just a few weeks. Locals who spoke to the BBC complained about "senseless" war and "money for Ukraine" as an issue. The AfD, as well as the Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance (BSW), have called for an end to the shipment of weapons to Kiev. "I think it is too late, too little too late. I think there's an election coming up in Brandenburg. I think that's not this Sunday, but the Sunday afterwards. It's likely to be very bad again for the ruling coalition," the senior research fellow responded.

"And Brandenburg is a particular embarrassment because it's the stronghold of Berlin, which, in turn, has always been historically the stronghold of the Social Democratic Party. So, even if they, Social Democrats, don't do as badly there, as they did in Thuringia and Saxony, it'll still be very embarrassing."

"...this coalition government is obviously acting in desperation. They've got 12 months left before the federal elections, they're obviously going to lose the federal elections because the full standing is so terrible. So they're floundering around trying to do something at the margins, because it's going to be very difficult. Because, having allowed in so many migrants, it's going to be really problematic trying to move them out," he added.

In September of 2015, former German Chancellor Angela Merkel made the decision to allow thousands of asylum seekers cross German borders after suspending the [Dublin Regulation](#), a [study](#) published in the European Journal of Political Research, explains.

The European Union (EU) regulation determined that the country responsible for processing asylum claims would be the first EU country that a migrant entered. Thereafter, between 2015 and 2017, Germany received about half of all asylum seeker claims across the EU, and received 1.1 million applicants in 2015 alone. The study, which was done in March, did not find the policy change to have a "pull-effect" on migrants that would signal an "open-door" policy to those who are not asylum seekers but do wish to migrate such as irregular migrants or humanitarian migrants.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk denounced Germany's recent decision as "[unacceptable](#)". And Joris Benigevoord, who is the mayor of Winterswijk and chairman of the Euregio group, called the decision a "panic reaction", while Austria's interior minister said they would not take in anyone who is turned away by Germany.

"...I think [there's] a lot of disgruntlement towards Germany, among other EU states, which I think is now contributing to the resentment directed at Scholz, who is talking about expelling these asylum seekers, but essentially dumping them in other EU states. And they say, well, we don't want to take them," said Szamuely. "I think Germany kind of let the side down by essentially opening the European doors in 2015."

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IDF Strikes Designated Humanitarian Zone Al-Mawasi, Killing at Least 19

The IDF struck the humanitarian zone with possibly five missiles in the early hours of Tuesday morning, eyewitnesses said. The strike left behind three large craters and prompted ambulances to rush to the scene.

More than a dozen Palestinians have been killed and another 60 were wounded after an airstrike on a designated humanitarian zone in southern Gaza, media outlets [reported](#) citing Gaza's ministry of health. Despite designating the area as a humanitarian zone, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) said they were targeting a Hamas command and control center in al-Mawasi, just west of Khan Younis.

According to Mohammed al-Mughair, a Gaza Civil Defense official, the death toll stands at 40 as of early [Tuesday](#). Ahmad al-Naqa, a fellow official for the same organization, explained that the toll is an estimate and that Gaza's Health Ministry reports the final numbers. Other reports put the toll at 19. The IDF claims that they killed three Hamas commanders after targeting a "number of senior" figures they say were "directly involved" in the October 7 attack.

Hamas has not confirmed these deaths and called the IDF's claims a "blatant lie". They added that they do not use civilian areas for military purposes.

The al-Mawasi camp is a designated area for displaced Palestinians, many of whom were reportedly sleeping during the early hours of Tuesday when the IDF struck their camp. The camp is a remote coastal area located between Khan Younis and Rafah in southeastern Gaza and has been designated as a humanitarian zone by the IDF for months now. It is also the last IDF-designated safe zone.

"People flew," Eyad Madi, an eyewitness of the bombing, told [reporters](#). "It's indescribable... We had to dig our children out from under the sand."

"I was lying inside the tent trying to sleep, and suddenly there was a loud sound of bombing, and we didn't know what happened," added Rami al-Shareef, a father of three. "There was the sound of three missiles. I went out with all the people in a panic after I checked on my three children and my wife, and they were fine."

In addition to those who were killed by the bombing, homes were also destroyed. The Washington Post reported that unverified videos following the strike showed people digging in the sand for survivors with their bare hands.

According to the Gaza Health ministry, more than 41,000 people have been killed and nearly 95,000 have been injured since the war between Hamas and Israel first began in October. Israel estimates that some 1,200 people were killed in October by Hamas.

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Some 400 Parishioners of Russian Church in Washington Celebrate Its 75th Anniversary

WASHINGTON (Sputnik) - Washington, DC's only parish of the Russian Orthodox Church abroad — the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of St. John the Baptist — celebrated its 75th anniversary with special holiday church service and special dinner reception, a Sputnik correspondent reported.

The reception which featured the church choir, the speeches of the clergy as well as dance and singing performances by the church groups.

One of the organizers told Sputnik that the event gathered at least 370 people. The parishioners — who are the nationals of various countries including Russia, the United States, Ethiopia, and Kazakhstan among others — celebrated the anniversary event at Saints Peter & Paul Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church, several miles outside of Washington DC.

Archpriest Victor Potapov, the rector of the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, told Sputnik earlier that while the parish holiday, the Beheading of John the Baptist, is celebrated on September 11, since this year it falls on a working day, the celebrations are held on September 7 and 8.

First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCOR), Metropolitan Nicholas, three bishops — Archbishop Gabriel of Montreal and Canada, Bishop Luke of Syracuse and retired Bishop Jerome (Shaw) as well as priests from different cities of the United States have participated in the event.

Father Victor also told Sputnik that they were preparing a book about the history of the parish, richly illustrated with photographs of famous parishioners, and they are preparing a special film. In addition, they have begun restoration of the large iconostasis.

The Washington parish is the only one in the United States that was created by St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco. In 1949, he came to the American capital to convince Congress to pass amendments to immigration laws and allow entry into the country of several thousand Russian immigrants who, after fleeing communist China, found shelter in a camp in the jungle of the Philippine island of Tubabao.

Saint John founded the parish on September 11, 1949, when he celebrated the first liturgy in the private apartment of one of the parishioners.

Father Victor noted that at first the parish rented a chapel in the Washington National Cathedral, and in 1958 it acquired the land on which the current church was eventually built, made in the traditional Moscow-Yaroslavl style of the 17th century.

The priest noted that over the past 40 years, the parish has been joined by many Americans who became interested in Orthodox Christianity and became Orthodox Christians. According to him, in this regard, most services are conducted in two languages — English and Church Slavonic.

The parish of St. John the Baptist in Washington is part of the Russian Church Abroad, also known as the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR), which has over 400 parishes around the world.

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United States Never Acknowledged Russia's Right to Exist

On Tuesday, the last US ambassador to the Soviet Union, Jack Matlock, said that the United States was engaged in an undeclared war with Russia and warned of the danger inherent in that. "It seems to me that it is extremely dangerous to attempt what is, in effect, an undeclared war against a nuclear armed power," Matlock warned.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States never acknowledged Russia's right to exist as a country or that it had legitimate national interests. NATO was focused on the Soviet Union for decades, when it collapsed, NATO turned its sights on Russia almost immediately, ignoring its calls for peace and cooperation and working towards its destruction.

"Now what I think [Ambassador Matlock] has done very well is to articulate the classical realist position, which is that we should be listening to our adversaries because if not, and we push them into a corner, then they will respond with violence," explained Nicolai Petro, a professor of political science at the University of Rhode Island on [Sputnik's The Critical Hour](#). "But to take that position seriously, we have to respect their right to exist. And that may be the greatest flaw in our post-Cold War foreign policy, that we never really decided whether Russia as a country has a right to exist and couldn't acknowledge to ourselves any legitimate scope for its national interests."

That is evidenced by NATO's continual expansion east, despite pledges not to when the Soviet Union collapsed., all the way up to Russia's borders and culminating in Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, which is an existential threat to Russia while merely a geopolitical game for the United States and the UK, who are driving the war through their financing and political pressure on the Kiev regime.

"I've always felt that wars end when people decide that it's no longer advantageous to them to fight," explained Petro. "Now, the disadvantages of warfare - destruction of property, deaths, killings, destroying the prospects for future generations – are most obvious [for] Ukraine itself. Then, maybe secondarily I would put the leading countries of Western Europe, who it seems to me at least, on a treadmill towards increasing international irrelevance."

Noting that Russia is also suffering from the conflict, Petro said that left only the UK and the US as "beneficiaries" of the conflict, saying that they "are the ones who are currently suffering the

least and able to continue the conflict, feeding it with money and weapons with, as they see it, minimal cost to themselves.”

Unfortunately for the American and British public, the benefits of the conflict do not go to them. Instead, it is the elites in those countries that benefit through the endless military contracts and what is sure to be the exploitation of the resources of whatever remains of Ukraine. That is why the media in the US has largely ignored Ukraine for more than a year, the glorious victory promised to the public is completely out of reach and so they hide the reality their policies created.

“What seems to also increasingly be the case, which did not used to be the case as much in the United States, is that this also involves the suppression of counter-narratives,” explained Petro.

“And that’s why, unless I’m very much mistaken, we’ll see a very reduced scope for meaningful foreign policy discussion in the debate tonight. I expect sloganeering and nothing more.”

Instead of focusing on reality, pundits and politicians in the US distract the public with narratives they create, foremost among them the idea of American exceptionalism.

“The idea that when we act in the world, we act for the benefit of all, not for our craven interests. And what we do is therefore morally irreproachable and as a result we can feel good about ourselves while we are ignoring the untidy parts of our history,” Petro explained. “And we have a long experience of that kind of sugarcoating.”

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Debate Poses Challenge for Harris Amid Rising Voter Frustration

On Tuesday Night, former US President Donald Trump will face off against current Vice President Kamala Harris in a highly anticipated debate that may be the only televised clash between the two major presidential candidates.

Journalist and author Dan Lazare sat down with radio Sputnik’s Political Misfits to preview the event, predicting that Harris will have the more difficult task in the debate.

“I think that Trump is gonna try to tie Harris to the Biden administration. Hold her responsible for all the things that have gone wrong - inflation, Afghanistan,” Lazare began, arguing that Harris will try to “make the case that she somehow simultaneously stands for continuity and change.”

“The question is whether... Trump can block that strategy or not,” he added.

As Vice President in US President Joe Biden’s administration, Harris holds responsibility for the administration’s actions, particularly since she seems unwilling to criticize her former running mate’s policies. “Therefore, she bears political responsibility,” explained Lazare. “Regardless of the details [of] who was involved in this program, that program, her specific role with the border, but broadly speaking, she bears responsibility.”

“Trump is going to try to hammer that home at every available opportunity and I assume that he will succeed to a degree,” Lazare continued, saying that Harris will likely “hit back on democracy and abortion, but we will see how that works.”

Ultimately, Lazare said that Harris has the harder task because “all the polls show that people are really hungry for change. They feel the status quo is totally dysfunctional.” Lazare noted that the argument that Harris is both the continuity candidate and the change candidate “doesn’t

make any sense” to him but that “maybe it’ll make sense to enough viewers to squeak out a victory.”

While Harris’ past as a prosecutor has led some to instinctively believe she must be capable of handling a debate, that was not evident during her 2020 presidential campaign. During democratic primary debates, she became visibly flustered when challenged on her record.

“I think she is a really poor debater. She doesn’t seem to have a command of the facts and – more importantly, she doesn’t have a command of the issues. She tends to get flustered. She launches into lengthy word salads.”

The best strategy for Harris, one that she is sure to lean on heavily during the debates, is to focus on the abortion issue. A recent poll showed Trump leading Harris by just two points in Florida, sitting just inside the margin of error and a significant drop off from Trump’s 3.7-point win over Joe Biden in the sunshine state in 2020.

One reason for the drop may be a voter initiative ballot in the state that would loosen restrictions on abortion.

“The Republicans are on very dangerous territory on the abortion issue. It’s not a popular stance,” explained Lazare. “And the Republican culture war is not popular either. Most people don’t want to ban books in libraries. Most people think it’s really, really silly. But, nonetheless, this is a central issue as far as the Republicans are concerned and they can’t let it go. So, they could well end up paying a price.”

The US Presidential debate is scheduled to begin at 9 pm EST (1 am GMT).

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UPDATE - US Consumer Prices Up 2.5% In Year To August, Closing In On Fed Target Amid Rate Cut Watch

(Adds comment, details and context in paragraphs 4-14)

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - US consumer prices rose 2.5% in the year to August, the Labor Department said Wednesday in a report that closed in on the Federal Reserve’s target for inflation, reinforcing bets that the central bank will begin by next week interest rate cuts that could continue till the year-end.

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, often known simply as the CPI, grew 2.9% in the year to July. The August number was exactly as forecast by economists on Wall Street and nearer to the Fed’s annual inflation target of 2%.

Soon after the CPI data was out, money market traders bet that the central bank would cut rates by 25 basis points at its September 18 policy meeting and reduce a total of 100 basis points by the end of the year.

“This marks the lowest annual inflation rate since March 2021,” The Kobeissi Letter, which comments on global capital markets, said in a post on the X platform. “The first rate cut since 2020 is coming next week.”

The last time the Fed reduced rates was in March 2020, right after the COVID-19 outbreak.

It then raised rates by 525 basis points between March 2022 and June 2023, bringing them to a two-decade high of between 5.25 and 5.5%, as inflation got out of control.

By June 2022, the CPI had hit 9.1% per annum — its highest in four decades — from the combined effects of government relief spending and the breakdown of supply chains triggered by the pandemic.

It began falling as the Fed unleashed a 15-month rate hike spree but, often, the drop wasn't as deep or quick as anticipated. For two years, the CPI stayed at above 3% per annum, only falling below that last month. The closer it gets to the Fed's 2%-per-annum target, the higher the chance of the central bank accelerating rate cuts.

But even with the August tumble in the CPI, core inflation — a measure that excludes volatile food and energy prices and is closely watched by Fed policymakers — was unchanged from July's annual growth of 3.2%.

The core CPI reading did not budge due to stronger inflation in shelter, airfares, auto insurance, education, apparel, and, particularly, airfares — which rose a whopping 4%. Prices for used cars and trucks, household furnishings, medical care, communication, and recreation slid, but not by enough to offset increases elsewhere.

"This serves as a bit of a reminder not to get too carried away with a few months of better inflation data," Brian Coulton, Fitch Rating's chief economist, said, reacting to August's core CPI.

Still, the drop in headline inflation was enough for the Biden administration, which has been waiting for the Fed to cut rates, to take a victory lap.

"Today's report shows that we are turning the page on inflation, which has fallen to 2.5%, close to the level the month before the pandemic started," National Economic Advisor Lael Brainard said in a statement released by the White House. "With inflation coming back down close to normal levels, it is important to focus on sustaining the historic gains we have made for American workers during this recovery."

After next week, the Fed has two more opportunities to cut rates at its November 7 and December 18 policy meetings.

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Hurricane Francine Nears Louisiana, Mississippi, Expected to Make Landfall Wednesday

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) – Hurricane Francine is approaching the US coast of the Gulf of Mexico and is expected to make landfall, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) said on Wednesday.

"There is a danger of life-threatening storm surge for the Louisiana and Mississippi coastlines, where a Storm Surge Warning is in effect. Residents in the warning area should follow advice, including evacuation orders, given by local authorities," the NHC said in a statement.

Portions of Louisiana may face damaging hurricane-force winds, it added.

Meteorologists also warned about heavy rainfall and the risk of considerable flash and urban flooding in Louisiana, Mississippi, as well as parts of states of Alabama and Florida through Thursday night, according to the statement.

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Trump 'Less Inclined' to Join 2nd Debate, Criticizes Moderators for Corrections - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) – Former US President Donald Trump on Wednesday said that he was less inclined to participate in a second debate with Vice President Kamala Harris and strongly criticized the moderators as well as their network for repeatedly correcting him, Fox News reported.

The two candidates faced off on ABC News on Tuesday night to spar on the economy, immigration, and the conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East. Trump said he gave his best performance ever, while the Harris camp celebrated her victory and called for a second debate.

“Well, I’d be less inclined to, because we had a great night. We won the debate. We had a terrible network. I think they were terrible. They should be embarrassed. I mean they kept correcting me,” Trump said during an audio interview with Fox and Friends.

The former president stressed that everything he had expressed was “largely right” and criticized the moderators for not correcting what he said were Harris’ continued lies.

“I even complained a couple of times. ‘Why are you not correcting them?’. Look, they should have corrected six or seven times,” Trump added.

Harris became the Democratic presidential nominee after President Joe Biden dropped out of the race amid pressure from the Democratic party following a poor performance against Trump in their first and only debate of the 2024 election cycle in June. The election will be held on November 5.

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US Consumer Prices Rose 2.5% In Year To August, As Per Wall Street Forecast Vs Previous 2.9% For July

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Trump Says He's 'Less Inclined' to Join Second Debate, Criticizes First Debate Moderators and Network for Corrections- Reports

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Kennedy Says Biden Administration's Approach to Russia 'Recipe for Nuclear Immolation'

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The Biden administration's approach to Russia risks nuclear war, independent 2024 US presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. said in response to comments by former President Donald Trump at a debate with Vice President Kamala Harris.

"Trump makes a point that I hope everyone hears: Russia has nuclear weapons. The Biden administration's policy of maximum confrontation, seeking Russia's humiliating defeat and regime change, is a recipe for nuclear immolation," Kennedy said on Tuesday night via the social media platform X.

Last month, Kennedy suspended his campaign and threw support behind Trump. Kennedy's name will not appear on ballots in so-called swing US states - a move designed to help Trump in those states.

Kennedy said that Trump's willingness to negotiate with Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the conflict in Ukraine would singlehandedly justify his support for the former president.

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Trump Says Debate Performance Against Harris His Best Ever, Despite 'Three on One'

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Former US President Donald Trump said following his debate with Vice President Kamala Harris that he had his best debate performance ever, despite Trump believing that the moderators were aiding Harris.

"I thought that was my best Debate, EVER, especially since it was THREE ON ONE," Trump said on Tuesday via Truth Social.

People are calling Trump's performance a "big win," the former president also said.

The Harris campaign likewise praised her debate performance and suggested a second debate in October.

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Harris Only Cares About Sovereignty of Other Nations, Should Secure US Border - CBP Union

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Vice President Kamala Harris during her first presidential debate stressed the importance of defending the sovereignty and territory of other countries but fails to apply the same standards when it comes to securing the US southern border, National Border Patrol Council Vice President Art del Cueto told Sputnik.

Democratic presidential nominee Harris during the debate against Republican rival Donald Trump on Tuesday night highlighted the Biden administration's work to defend Ukraine's sovereignty and territory amid Russia's special military operation but avoided fully addressing the illegal immigration crisis on the US southern border.

"Border Czar Harris discussed 'the importance of sovereignty and territorial integrity,' however, she apparently only cares about every other country's sovereignty because when it comes to America, she and President Biden opened up the border and erased any semblance of sovereignty," Cueto said Tuesday.

Illegal migration on the US southern border has gone through three consecutive record-breaking years since Biden became president, totaling some 8 million illegal encounters during that period, according to US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) data. Since October 2023, an estimated 1.9 million migrants have been apprehended for illegally crossing into the United States on the southern border, CBP data shows.

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US Pop Star Taylor Swift Says Endorses Harris For President

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Global pop icon Taylor Swift has endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris as the next US president, saying she made her decision after listening to the Democrat's policy plans at a presidential debate on Tuesday.

"I will be casting my vote for Kamala Harris and Tim Walz in the 2024 Presidential Election," Swift said in a post on X platform that referred to the Democratic Party's nominees for president and vice president, respectively.

The post had a picture of Swift holding a cat and was signed off as a "Childless Cat Lady" — an apparent dig at Trump's running mate and Republican vice presidential nominee JD Vance who used that phrase to describe Harris and other women who put position and power over raising children and caring for their families.

Swift's endorsement could be significant for Harris given the pop icon's fan base of "Swifties" made up mostly of young people and women whom the vice president is counting on to give her the edge to beat Trump.

The 34-year-old singer, who previously backed Democrat President Joe Biden in the 2020 election when Harris was his running mate, said her present decision was made after careful thought.

"Like many of you, I watched the debate tonight," Swift wrote in her post. "If you haven't already, now is a great time to do your research on the issues at hand and the stances these candidates take on the topics that matter to you the most. As a voter, I make sure to watch and read everything I can about their proposed policies and plans for this country. I'm voting for Kamala Harris because she fights for the rights and causes I believe need a warrior to champion them."

She also praised Walz's stance on gays and abortion for women, noting that he "has been standing up for LGBTQ+ rights, IVF, and a woman's right to her own body for decades."

Turning to the "risks" posed by Trump, Swift said she was startled by a post on his social media website that claimed she had endorsed him when she hadn't.

"Recently I was made aware that AI of 'me' falsely endorsing Donald Trump's presidential run was posted to his site," she said. "It really conjured up my fears around AI, and the dangers of spreading misinformation. It brought me to the conclusion that I need to be very transparent about my actual plans for this election as a voter."

Earlier in the day, a 90-minute debate between Harris and Trump took place. Harris' campaign has suggested another debate in October, ahead of the November 5 election.

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September 11 Continues to Play Important Role For Americans - Retired US Colonel

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The events of 9/11 continue to play an important role in Americans' lives despite the fact that 23 years have passed since the deadliest terrorist attacks in the world occurred in the United States, retired US Army Colonel and international consultant Earl Rasmussen told Sputnik.

On September 11, 2001, Al Qaeda terrorists hijacked four airplanes in the US. Two of them crashed the World Trade Center (WTC) in New York City, another one targeted the Pentagon building near Washington, DC, and the fourth one fell down in the state of Pennsylvania. Almost 3,000 people were killed.

"I still believe that 9/11 continues to play an important role in our lives. It is a day that resulted in us being engaged in 20-plus years of war, and countless others' lives have left us. Moreover, our daily lives remain forever impacted and changed," Rasmussen said.

Rasmussen recalled that his wife was supposed to have a meeting in the Pentagon with the Army budget office but was lucky to avoid death.

"Due to scheduling conflicts, the meeting was rescheduled at the last minute from the Pentagon to her office in Arlington. Almost the entire Army Budget Office staff would be killed that day as the aircraft crashed directly into the side of the Pentagon where they were located," he said.

One of Rasmussen's colleague's daughter lived in New York and worked with a company in the World Trade Center. Fortunately, that morning, she changed her tradition of having coffee inside the WTC and walked a block away, saving her life.

"It took her father all day to get in touch with her because cell phone connections seemed to be overloaded, but she was safe," he added.

Another co-worker visited New York City just two days before the attack for a bachelor party of

one of his best friends.

"His friend worked for one of the brokerage companies in the World Trade Center. Unfortunately, he did not survive," Rasmussen said.

He expressed confidence that almost every American has personal connections to the events on September 11, 2001. This day will not be forgotten and will linger in people's memories for generations to come, he added.

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Trump Says Debate Performance Against Harris His Best Ever, Despite 'Three on One'

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Former US President Donald Trump said following his debate with Vice President Kamala Harris that he had his best debate performance ever, despite Trump believing that the moderators were aiding Harris.

"I thought that was my best Debate, EVER, especially since it was THREE ON ONE," Trump said on Tuesday via Truth Social.

People are calling Trump's performance a "big win," the former president also said.

The Harris campaign likewise praised her debate performance and suggested a second debate in October.

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Harris Campaign Says 2nd Debate With Trump Should Happen in October

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The campaign of Democratic nominee Kamala Harris said that the second debate with Republican nominee Donald Trump should take place next month, Harris-Walz campaign Chair Jen O'Malley Dillon said in a statement.

"Under the bright lights, the American people got to see the choice they will face this fall at the ballot box: between moving forward with Kamala Harris or going backwards with Trump," O'Malley said after the first presidential debate concluded on Tuesday night. "That's what they saw tonight and what they should see at a second debate in October.

O'Malley also said that Harris is ready for a second debate but questioned whether Trump is ready.

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Kennedy Says Biden Administration's Approach to Russia 'Recipe for Nuclear Immolation'

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The Biden administration's approach to Russia risks

nuclear war, independent 2024 US presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. said in response to comments by former President Donald Trump at a debate with Vice President Kamala Harris.

"Trump makes a point that I hope everyone hears: Russia has nuclear weapons. The Biden administration's policy of maximum confrontation, seeking Russia's humiliating defeat and regime change, is a recipe for nuclear immolation," Kennedy said on Tuesday night via the social media platform X.

Last month, Kennedy suspended his campaign and threw support behind Trump. Kennedy's name will not appear on ballots in so-called swing US states - a move designed to help Trump in those states.

Kennedy said that Trump's willingness to negotiate with Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the conflict in Ukraine would singlehandedly justify his support for the former president.

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Harris Claims US Has No Troops in Conflict Zones Around World

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - US Vice President Kamala Harris said during a debate with former US President Donald Trump that the United States does not have troops in any conflict zone around the world.

"As of today, there is not one member of the US military who is in active duty in a combat zone, in any war zone around the world – the first time this century," Harris said on Tuesday evening.

The US military has had forces deployed in countries around the world under the Biden administration, including Syria, Iraq and Jordan.

During the June debate between Trump and US President Joe Biden, Biden falsely claimed that he was the only president to not have any troops die anywhere in the world.

In August 2021, 13 US military servicemembers died during the withdrawal from Afghanistan, due to a suicide bombing at the airport in Kabul.

Moreover, in January 2024, three US troops were killed by a drone attack in Jordan.

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Trump Says He Thinks Putin 'Meant' Backing VP Kamala Harris for US Election Win

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Former President Donald Trump said he thinks Russian President Vladimir Putin genuinely supports Vice President Kamala Harris's candidacy and expressed a desire for her to win the US election.

"Putin endorsed her last week, said, 'I hope she wins,' and I think he meant it, because what he's gotten away with is absolutely incredible," Trump said during his first debate with Harris on Tuesday.

Last week, Putin said that Russia will support US presidential candidate Kamala Harris, as recommended by US President Joe Biden. Putin clarified his statement by saying that the

American people are the ones to decide who will be the president of the United States.

However, White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby said that Putin should refrain from discussing the US presidential elections.

The US presidential election will be held on November 5. Harris will represent the Democratic Party, and Trump will represent the Republican Party.

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Harris Says Putin Would Be Sitting in Kiev Now if Trump Were President

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Democratic nominee and Vice President Kamala Harris said on Russian President Vladimir Putin would be sitting in Kiev now if Republican nominee Donald Trump were in the White House.

"If Donald Trump were president, Putin would be sitting in Kiev right now," Harris said during the first presidential debate with Trump on Tuesday night.

Harris noted that she met with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy a few days before the start of the Russian special military operation in Ukraine and shared with him US intelligence about how the country can defend itself.

Russia has been conducting a special military operation in Ukraine since February 24, 2022. Putin has said the operation aims to protect people subjected to genocide by the Kiev regime for eight years. Putin also said that it is necessary to remove military forces and Nazi elements from Ukraine.

Since the beginning of Russia's special military operation, the countries in the collective Western have been providing Kiev with military equipment in the hundreds of billion of dollars as well as training for Ukrainian soldiers.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has accused NATO member states of being directly involved in the Ukrainian conflict. Lavrov has warned that any cargo containing weapons for Ukraine will become a legitimate target for Russian strikes.

The Kremlin has consistently warned against continued arms deliveries to Kiev, saying it would lead to further escalation of the conflict. In April 2022, Russia sent a diplomatic note to all NATO countries on the issue of arms supplies to Ukraine.

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Trump Criticizes Biden for Not Talking to Putin in 2 Years to Resolve Ukraine Conflict

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Republican nominee Donald Trump criticized President Joe Biden for not making an effort to talk to Russian President Vladimir Putin in two years to try to resolve the conflict in Ukraine.

"He [Biden] hasn't even made a phone call in two years to Putin, hasn't spoken to anybody. They don't even try and get it. That is a war that's dying to be settled," Trump said on Tuesday

night in his debate against his Democratic rival Kamala Harris.

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Trump Says in Presidential Debate He Wants Ukraine Conflict to Stop, Can Broker Peace

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Republican nominee Donald Trump said in a presidential debate that he wants the Ukraine conflict to come to an end immediately and claims he will be able to immediately broker a peace plan if reelected.

"I want the war to stop, I want to save lives," Trump said on Tuesday night in the debate against Democratic nominee Kamala Harris.

Trump said he would speak with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy, adding that he would also be able to get both leaders to negotiate and end the conflict.

It is in the United States' best interest to get the Ukraine conflict resolved quickly, Trump added.

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IMF Approves Staff Level Agreement for Ukraine to Access \$1.1Bln - Statement

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced in a statement that it has approved a staff-level agreement with Ukraine that would allow Kiev access to \$1.1 billion in funding.

"International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff and the Ukrainian authorities have reached staff-level agreement (SLA) on the Fifth Review of the four-year Extended Fund Facility (EFF) Arrangement. Subject to approval by the IMF Executive Board, Ukraine would have access to about US\$ 1.1 billion (SDR 834.8 million)," the statement said on Tuesday.

IMF team leader Gavin Gray said the IMF Executive Board consideration is expected in the coming weeks.

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trump says Biden hasn't even called Putin in 2 years

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Trump in presidential debate on whether he wants Ukraine to win, says I want 'war' to stop

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

Harris In Debate Says As President She Will Always Give Israel Ability To Defend Itself

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - US Vice President Kamala Harris said that she will always provide Israel with the ability to defend itself.

"But the one thing I will assure you always - I will always give Israel the ability to defend itself in particular as it relates to Iran and any threat that Iran and its proxies pose to Israel," Harris said during the first debate with former US President Donald Trump on Tuesday.

Harris stressed that "far too many" innocent Palestinians have been killed in the ongoing conflict.

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Trump Says He Believes Israel 'Will Not Exist' in 2 Years if Harris Wins Presidency

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Republican nominee Donald Trump said during the presidential debate against Democratic nominee Kamala Harris that Israel will not exist in two years from now if she wins the US election in November.

"If she's president, I believe that Israel will not exist within two years from now," Trump said on Tuesday night.

Harris said in earlier remarks at the debate that she would continue to provide US security assistance to Israel so that the country has the ability to defend itself.

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Trump Says Does Not Acknowledge 2020 US Presidential Election Loss

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Former US President Donald Trump said during a debate with US Vice President Kamala Harris that he continues to deny the results of the 2020 US presidential election.

"No, I don't acknowledge that at all," Trump said on Tuesday night, when asked if he acknowledges the 2020 election loss.

There is "so much proof" on the election results, Trump said.

The election results should have been sent back to the legislatures for approval, Trump also said.

In addition, Trump said he lost the election results challenges in court because the judges said he lacked standing and the judges never saw the evidence.

US President Joe Biden officially beat Trump in the 2020 race.

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Harris Says She Will Not Ban Fracking If Elected Next US President

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - US Vice President Kamala Harris said that she will not ban fracking if elected the next President of the United States.

"I made that very clear in 2020, I will not ban fracking," Harris said during the debate with former US President Donald Trump hosted by ABC News in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

"I have not banned fracking as vice president United States, and in fact, I was the tie breaking vote on the inflation Reduction Act which opened new leases for fracking."

Harris stressed that her stance on the matter is that Washington has to invest in diverse sources of energy in order to reduce its reliance on foreign oil.

"We have had the largest increase in domestic oil production in history because of an approach that recognizes that we cannot overrely on foreign oil," she added.

Before taking office as vice president and becoming Joe Biden's running mate, in September 2019, Harris made it clear that she supported a complete ban on fracking.

Harris and the Democrats now face the difficult task of winning Pennsylvania, one of the key US states where there is no clear leader yet and where the issue of fracking is particularly relevant.

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Trump Says Took 'Bullet to the Head' Because of Comments Made by Political Opponents

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Former President Donald Trump said during a debate with Vice President Kamala Harris that he was likely the victim of an assassination attempt because of comments made by political opponents like her.

"I probably took a bullet to the head because of the things that they say about me," Trump said on Tuesday evening, pointing to Harris. "They talk about democracy, I'm a threat to democracy; they're the threat to democracy with the fake Russia, Russia, Russia investigation that went nowhere."

In July, a shooter attempted to assassinate Trump at a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania. The gunman shot Trump in the ear, killed one audience member and wounded two others.

US law enforcement authorities and lawmakers are investigating the assassination attempt, for which an exact motive remains unclear.

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Trump Says US Will Turn Into 'Venezuela on Steroids' if Harris Wins in November

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Former President Donald Trump said that the United States will turn into "Venezuela on steroids" if Vice President Kamala Harris wins the upcoming presidential elections in November.

"She [Harris] is destroying this country and if she becomes president, this country doesn't have a chance of success," Trump said during the first presidential debate on Tuesday night. "We'll end up being Venezuela on steroids."

The debate is hosted by ABC News in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The US presidential election will be held on November 5.

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Harris in Debate Says Trump's Plan Will Make Economy Worse, Mine Would Make It Stronger

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Vice President Kamala Harris said that she will enrich America's economy if elected president while her rival Donald Trump would make it worse as the two candidates clashed in a debate for the first time in the 2024 White House race.

"Donald Trump has no plan for you," Harris told the debate hosted by the ABC network on Tuesday. "And when you look at his economic plan, it's all about tax breaks for the richest people. I am offering what I describe as an opportunity economy. I pledge to you to be a president for all Americans."

Harris, the Democratic vice president, also blamed former Republican president Trump for the disruption in America's job market and economy after the COVID-19 outbreak.

"If he were elected again, I believe very strongly that the American people want a president who understands the importance of bringing us together. Now, we have so much more in common than what separates us."

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Harris in Presidential Debate Says Vital US Wins Tech Race With China

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Democratic nominee Kamala Harris during the presidential debate with Republican nominee Donald Trump said it is important that the United States win the technology race with China, adding that the United States must boost microchip production.

"A policy about China should be in making sure the United States of America wins the competition for the 21st century, which means focusing on the details of what that requires, focusing on relationships with our allies, focusing on investing in American-based technology so that we win the race on AI, on Quantum Computing," Harris said Tuesday night.

Harris claimed that under Trump's presidency, he ended up selling American chips to China to help them improve and modernize their military.

Harris said Trump basically sold the United States out to China.

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Trump Says Has Nothing to Do With Project 2025, Never Read It

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - Former US President Donald Trump said during the presidential debate with Vice President Kamala Harris that he has nothing to do with Project 2025 and has not even looked at it.

"Number one, I have nothing to do, and you know and she knows better than anyone, I have nothing to do with Project 2025 that's out there," Trump said on Tuesday night after Harris accused him that he is proponent of the project. "I haven't read it, I don't want to read it purposely, I am not going to read it."

Trump said that Project 2025 was a group of people that came up with some ideas - some of which he called good and some bad. But Trump underscored that he has nothing to do with the project.

In August, Harris' running mate Tim Walz said that Trump would push for implementing the ideas in Project 2025 if he wins the presidential election in November. Trump denied then that he has nothing to do with the Project 2025.

Project 2025 is a movement established by more than 100 organizations from across the conservative movement in the United States to take down the "Deep State" and return the government to the people, according to the project's website.

The project's book "Leadership: The Conservative Promise," was written by more than 400 scholars and policy experts as well as offers policy suggestions, including securing the US borders and deporting illegal aliens.

The book also calls for de-weaponizing the US federal government by increasing accountability and oversight of the FBI and Justice Department, unleashing US energy production to reduce energy prices as well as cutting the growth of government spending among other policy suggestions.

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Неудачи Boeing Starliner изобличили эрозию космической промышленной базы США - эксперты

ВАШИНГТОН, 11 сен - РИА Новости. Вынужденное возвращение космического корабля Starliner с международной космической станции (МКС) пролило свет на слабые места космической промышленной базы США и проблемы с контролем качества, что в результате повлияло и на упадок МКС, заявили РИА Новости западные эксперты.

Созданный американской компанией Boeing по контракту с НАСА Starliner отправился в первый пилотируемый полет с астронавтами НАСА Барри Уилмором и Сунитой Уильямс 5 июня. Планировалось, что испытательная миссия продлится около недели, но из-за

обнаруженных во время стыковки со станцией проблем в двигателе корабля и последующей утечки гелия тест затянулся. Специалистам не удалось ликвидировать выявленные неполадки и Starliner вернулся на Землю без экипажа.

Астронавты-испытатели НАСА Уилмор и Уильямс останутся на МКС до февраля и вернутся домой на корабле Crew Dragon компании SpaceX - конкурента Boeing.

"Пока не сформируется стабильный многополярный мировой баланс, и США не прекратят свои попытки добиться мировой гегемонии, подкрепленной ядерным оружием, и не откажутся от своей самопровозглашенной и плохо исполняемой роли мирового полицейского, а также не приведут в порядок свои собственные финансы, МКС будет лишь мелочью, отвлекающей от главного", - заявила РИА Новости бывший аналитик Пентагона и подполковник ВВС США в отставке Карен Квятковски.

Со-основатель Глобальной сети против оружия и ядерной энергии в космосе Брюс Ганьон сказал, что МКС подходит к концу своих почти трех десятилетий существования, поскольку бюджет НАСА сокращается, военные расходы США увеличиваются, а государственный долг превышает 35 триллионов долларов. В свете этого США не смогут поддерживать финансирование для удовлетворения потребностей в космосе и технологиях, утверждает Ганьон.

"Весь ландшафт экономического доминирования США рухнет, и способность продолжать эти дорогостоящие программы в военных или космических миссиях на Луну, Марс и дальше окажется затронута", — сказал Ганьон.

Отставной аналитик Пентагона Чак Спинни в комментариях РИА Новости отметил, что для дальнейшего поддержания МКС США придется рассчитывать на сотрудничество с Россией.

КРИЗИС В BOEING

"У Boeing, очевидно, есть огромные проблемы с внутренним руководством и контролем качества, и мне кажется, что в ближайшие годы они потеряют много клиентов ...

Поскольку система образования США все больше становится неспособной производить достаточно квалифицированных и опытных молодых работников, эти проблемы будут сохраняться," — отмечает Ганьон.

Квятковски предполагает, что Boeing может потерять коммерческие контракты, несмотря на то, что в прошлом месяце компания наняла выдающегося инженера Роберта Келли Ортберга на должность генерального директора.

"Boeing наконец-то наняла опытного инженера на должность генерального директора, (но — ред.) я думаю, что этого может быть уже слишком мало и слишком поздно", — заявила Квятковски.

Историк и вице-президент фонда Rising Tide Foundation Мэттью Эрет в комментарии РИА Новости предупредил, что неспособность компании устранить технологические сбои может иметь фатальные последствия.

"Если Starliner компании Boeing когда-либо снова полетит с экипажем после постыдного, катастрофического запуска на этой неделе, это произойдет только из-за того, что агентства, контролирующие сегодняшнюю американскую космическую политику, хотят забить последний гвоздь в гроб в духе пилотируемых космических полетов", — заявил Эрет.

Кризис Starliner, добавил Эрет, также является примером того, как переход космических

полетов в коммерческую парадигму привел к росту рисков.

"Независимо от того, будет ли это Virgin Galactic сэра Ричарда Брэнсона, Blue Origins Джеффа Безоса, SpaceX Илона Маска или частный космический отдел Boeing, они все сокращают бюджеты, максимизируют прибыль для акционеров, делая космические полеты опасным занятием, доступным в первую очередь сверхбогатым, вместо того, чтобы приносить пользу общему благосостоянию", — заключил Эрет.

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Trump Says Immigrants Taking Over Towns in US, Bringing Violence

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Immigrants are violently taking over towns and buildings in the United States, former US President Donald Trump said during the debate with US Vice President Kamala Harris.

"We have millions of people pouring into our country... you see what's happening with towns throughout the United States. You look at Springfield, Ohio. You look at Aurora in Colorado. They are taking over the towns. They are taking over buildings. They're going in violently," Trump said on Tuesday evening.

The immigrants were brought into the US by the Biden-Harris administration, Trump said.

Trump's comment comes following disputed reports about Haitian migrants in Springfield killing and eating pets.

Trump's comment also references the purported takeover of an apartment building by Venezuelan gang members in Aurora.

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Trump, Harris Shake Hands as US Presidential Debate Begins

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - The first presidential debate between former US President Donald Trump and US Vice President Kamala Harris kicked off with a handshake between the two political rivals.

Once the two presidential candidates entered the room, they walked toward each other and Harris was the first to extend her hand.

The debate is held on ABC News in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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US Presidential Debate Begins, Trump and Harris Shake Hands

Sputnik

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Springfield Resident Informed Police of Haitians Carrying Geese - Police Report

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - A man in Springfield, Ohio reported a group of Haitians carrying dead geese in public, according to a copy of the call audio and local police report.

The report comes after US officials began commenting in recent days on disputed reports of Haitian immigrants in Springfield killing pets and birds.

"I'm sitting here, I'm riding on the trail, I'm going to my orientation for my job today, and I see a group of Haitian people, there was about four of them, they all had geese in their hand," the caller said in the audio, released by The Federalist on Tuesday.

The Springfield Police Division told local media on Monday that they were aware of the allegations but that the matter was not on the department's "radar" at present.

The call was placed on August 26, prior to the allegations reaching the national spotlight.

In July 2024, Springfield City Manager Bryan Heck sent a letter to US senators, urging federal support for the city amid a housing crisis. Springfield took in 15,000-20,000 Haitians over the last four years, adding to its previous population of just under 60,000 residents, according to the letter.

Haiti has experienced increased criminal activity and political instability following the assassination of Haitian President Jovenel Moise in July 2021.

Earlier on Tuesday, White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby accused Republicans of spreading racially charged conspiracy theories about the situation in Springfield.

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Aerospace Corp. Gets \$1.2Bln Boost to Research Space Systems Operations - Pentagon

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The Aerospace Corporation has received a more than \$1.2 billion US Air Force contract extension to continue research and development for the US Space Systems Command, the Defense Department announced.

"The Aerospace Corporation [of] El Segundo, California has been awarded a \$1,245,899,909 modification ...contract for federally funded research and development corporation support," the Defense Department said in a press release on Tuesday.

The modification brings the total value of the contract to \$8,193,196,575, the release said.

Work on the contract will be performed in El Segundo, California over the coming year and is expected to be completed by September 30, 2025, and the Space Systems Command, Enterprise Sourcing Division in El Segundo is the contracting activity, the release added.

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US Awards \$950M In Contract for Submarine Industrial Base Support - Pentagon

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - BlueForge Alliance won a contract worth more than \$950 million to resource, coordinate and boost the US submarine industrial base, the Defense Department said in a press release.

"BlueForge Alliance, Bryan, Texas, is awarded a \$950,744,520 cost-plus-fixed-fee contract to support planning, resourcing, coordinating, and uplifting the US Submarine Industrial Base and Foreign Military Sales requirements," the release said on Tuesday.

Work on the contract will be performed in Bryan, Texas over the coming fiscal year 2024 and beyond it, the Defense Department noted.

The US Naval Sea Systems Command located in Washington, DC will oversee the project as its contracting activity, the release added.

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Austin in Call With Israel's Gallant Criticized IDF Role in Death of US Citizen - Pentagon

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin in a telephone call with his Israeli counterpart Yoav Gallant expressed serious concern over the Israeli military's responsibility in the recent death of Turkish-American citizen Aysenur Eygi during a demonstration in the West Bank, Defense Department spokesperson Maj. Gen. Patrick Ryder said in a press release.

"Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III spoke with Israeli Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant today to express his grave concern for the IDF's responsibility for the unprovoked and unjustified death of American citizen Aysenur Eygi while she was attending a protest in the West Bank," Ryder said in the release on Tuesday.

Austin urged Gallant to reexamine the Israeli military's rules of engagement while operating in the West Bank, Ryder added.

Earlier, US President Joe Biden said Eygi's death was an accident, claiming that an Israeli soldier's bullet ricocheted and fatally struck her head.

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UPDATE - ExxonMobil Texas Plant Lifts Shelter-in-Place, Says 'No Leak' at Facility

(Updates headline, lede and details throughout with new alert status)

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The Texas city of Beaumont said in an advisory that the ExxonMobil facility has issued an alert urging nearby residents to immediately take shelter inside the nearest building, close ventilation systems, and seal all door and window gaps, before

lifting the measure.

"ExxonMobil Beaumont is issuing an immediate shelter in place for the Charlton Pollard Neighborhood," the advisory said on Tuesday. "Go inside the nearest building. Close and lock all windows and doors. Turn off all ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, and close any fireplace dampers."

The alert also urged nearby residents to seal all gaps under doorways and windows with wet towels or duct tape.

Residents were encouraged to remain indoors until an official "All Clear" notice is given by officials, the statement added.

Later on Tuesday afternoon, the city of Beaumont announced that ExxonMobil Beaumont lifted the shelter-in-place for the Charlton-Pollard Neighborhood.

The city said in its update that "all systems are clear," and there is no leak at the ExxonMobil facility in Beaumont and no cause for further concern in the local community.

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Beijing to Take Resolute Action Against Canadian Tariffs on Chinese Products - Embassy

(Updates with more details throughout the article)

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Beijing strongly opposes Canada's latest 30-day consultation period on potential new surtaxes on solar and critical mineral products as well as battery and semiconductor imports from China and will take resolute measures to protect its interests, a spokesperson for the Chinese Embassy in Ottawa told Sputnik.

Earlier on Tuesday, Ottawa launched a 30-day consultation, from September 10, 2024, to October 10, 2024, on potential additional surtaxes on a range of Chinese products.

The government argued that new tariffs could further curb alleged unfair competition from Chinese producers and help protect Canada's critical manufacturing sectors. Ottawa notably accuses China of engaging in practices enabled by its purported intentional and state-directed policy of oversupply.

"Today, Canada launched consultations on potential surtaxes on China's batteries and battery parts, semiconductors, solar products and critical minerals, continuing and expanding its unilateralism and protectionism measures, which will further severely damage the multilateral trading system and disrupt the global industrial and supply chains in relevant sectors. China strongly opposes such measures and will continue to take resolute measures to defend its legitimate rights," the spokesperson said.

In late-August, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that Canada was imposing a 100% surtax on Chinese-made electrical vehicles and a 25% surtax on steel and aluminum imports from China to curb what it called "unfair competition" from Chinese producers.

In the wake of those surtaxes, China's Embassy in Ottawa told Sputnik that Beijing condemned the measures and rejected the Canadian tariffs. The embassy empathized that China would safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of the country's enterprises.

On Friday, the Chinese Ministry of Commerce announced that it had lodged a consultation request at the World Trade Organization over Canada's decision to impose tariffs on Chinese

electric vehicles.

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ExxonMobil Texas Plant Issues Immediate Shelter Alert, Urges People to Close Ventilation

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The Texas city of Beaumont said in an advisory that the ExxonMobil facility has issued an alert urging nearby residents to immediately take shelter inside the nearest building, close ventilation systems and seal all door and window gaps.

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US House of Representatives Passes Bills to Address Chinese Influence, Hong Kong Autonomy

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives passed legislation to counter the influence efforts of China and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in the United States.

House lawmakers passed a bill to restrict funding to US higher education institutions that maintain a relationship with the Confucius Institute or Chinese entities of concern.

The House of Representatives passed the legislation in a vote of 249 in favor and 161 opposed on Tuesday.

"For years, the CCP has worked to spread propaganda and conduct sophisticated espionage around the world, particularly targeting the United States and seeking to infiltrate and exploit America's classrooms and institutions of higher learning," House Majority Leader Steve Scalise said in a statement on the bill.

House lawmakers also debated the Protect America's Innovation and Economic Security from CCP Act on Tuesday, although a passage vote on the bill was postponed.

The legislation reinstates and renames the China Initiative as the CCP Initiative, which is intended to counter CCP and Chinese government espionage efforts on US intellectual property and academic institutions. The initiative is housed in the US Justice Department's National Security Division.

The initiative prosecutes people who engage in the theft of trade secrets and espionage, as well as defends US critical infrastructure against threats from adversaries. The initiative was created under the Trump administration in 2018 but terminated in 2022 by the Biden

administration.

Additionally, the House of Representatives passed the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (HKETO) Certification Act on Tuesday in a vote of 413 in favor and three opposed.

The bill requires the president to remove the extension of certain privileges, exemptions and immunities to the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices if Hong Kong no longer enjoys a "high degree of autonomy" from China.

House lawmakers passed several other China-related bills on Monday as part of what House Speaker Mike Johnson dubbed "China week" in the House of Representatives.

In July, the Chinese Embassy in the US told Sputnik that US lawmakers should stop pushing bills aimed at containing, suppressing and smearing China. The US and China stand to gain from cooperation and lose from confrontation, the embassy said.

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Lockheed Martin, Tata Systems to Set Up C-130 Manufacturing Plant in India - Statement

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Lockheed Martin and the leading Indian high aerospace giant Tata Industries have signed an agreement to jointly produce C-130J Super-Hercules military aircraft and boost India's aerospace industries, the US defense contractor announced in a news release.

"Lockheed Martin and Tata Advanced Systems Limited have entered into a teaming agreement to expand upon the companies' business relationship through the C-130J Super Hercules tactical airlifter," the release said on Tuesday.

The agreement marks a significant step in enhancing India's defense and aerospace capabilities while also deepening India-US strategic ties, the release said.

Under the agreement, Lockheed Martin and Tata will create a maintenance, repair and overhaul facility in India to support the Indian Air Force's existing fleet of 12 C-130Js as well as other global Super Hercules fleets, the release added.

The two companies will also expand C-130J manufacturing and assembly in India to produce aircraft for the IAF's Medium Transport Aircraft (MTA) program, according to the release.

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Beijing to Take Resolute Action Against Canadian Tariffs on Chinese Products - Embassy

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"Today, Canada launched consultations on potential surtaxes on China's batteries and battery parts, semiconductors, solar products and critical minerals, continuing and expanding its unilateralism and protectionism measures, which will further severely damage the multilateral

trading system and disrupt the global industrial and supply chains in relevant sectors. China strongly opposes such measures and will continue to take resolute measures to defend its legitimate rights," the spokesperson said on Tuesday.

In late-August, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that Canada was imposing a 100% surtax on Chinese-made electric vehicles and a 25% surtax on steel and aluminum imports from China to curb what it called "unfair competition" from Chinese producers.

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UK Defense Giant Wins DARPA Contract to Boost AI Air Combat Capabilities - BAE Systems

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - BAE Systems has won a Department of Defense contract to advance Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities for tactical use in air combat, utilizing US F-16 Fighting Falcons in testing and research, the United Kingdom (UK) aerospace giant contractor announced in a press release.

"The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has awarded BAE Systems' FAST Labs research and development organization a \$4 million contract for Phase 1 of the Artificial Intelligence Reinforcements (AIR) program," the release stated on Tuesday.

The DARPA AIR program aims to advance dominant tactical autonomy for beyond-visual-range air combat missions, BAE said. Autonomy solutions will be developed and demonstrated on F-16 testbeds, the company said.

"Using machine learning, we will train the models used to make dynamic decisions – ensuring that the Artificial Intelligence (AI) pilot is tested and trusted by human pilots," BAE Systems' FAST Labs, Principal Investigator Michael Planer said in the release.

Under the AIR contract, BAE Systems will use machine learning (ML) to innovate simulation models of existing sensors, electronic warfare systems, and weapons within dynamic and operationally representative environments. ML techniques will also capture the underlying physics of aerial maneuvers and systems, the release explained.

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US to Launch Quantum Entanglement Swap Satellite in 2026 to Boost Global Links - Boeing

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Boeing plans to launch a revolutionary new communications satellite in two years that will utilize quantum entanglement swapping technology, the US defense contractor announced in a press release.

"Boeing today announced the scheduled 2026 launch of a satellite - dubbed Q4S - which is designed to demonstrate quantum entanglement swapping capabilities in orbit," the release said on Tuesday.

Boeing explained in the release that the new technology will start the construction of a secure, global quantum internet that connects quantum sensors and computers.

Entanglement swapping relies on quantum teleportation - a method where the information

carried by a particle can be transferred without having to move the particle itself across the distance, the release said.

The phenomenon is often referred to as "spooky action at a distance," the release said.

Boeing also said that it is making a big bet on quantum technology, noting that quantum entanglement swapping underpins the communication of the future as it expands quantum networks beyond simple point-to-point communication.

"We're launching Q4S to prove it can be done in orbit," Boeing's Disruptive Computing, Networks and Sensors Chief Engineer Jay Lowell said in the release.

Quantum computers have the capacity to process large amounts of data, offering potential to revolutionize an array of industries and the new satellite will demonstrate quantum networking in space, helping to better understand how these networks can be built across vast distances and remain highly synchronized, according to Boeing.

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Blinken Says Will Not Rule Out Letting Ukraine Use US Weapons for Deep Strikes in Russia

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in an interview with Sky News that he would not rule out the United States allowing Ukraine to use US-supplied long-range weapons to strike deep inside Russian territory.

"We've adapted and adjusted every step along the way, and we'll continue, so not ruling out at this stage," Blinken said in the interview on Tuesday.

Earlier in the day, Blinken accused Iran of completing a transfer of several hundred short-range ballistic missiles to Russia for use in Ukraine in the coming weeks. Iran has repeatedly denied the allegations.

Axios reported on Tuesday that US House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Michael McCaul said he was told by Blinken of his upcoming visit to Kiev - alongside UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy - to notify Ukrainian officials that they can use the US-supplies long-range ATACMS missiles to hit targets inside Russia.

The United States currently has a policy in place that allegedly does not permit Ukraine to use ATACMS to hit targets in Russian territory.

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Musk Says Harris' Rent Control Plan Will Destroy US Housing

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - Vice President Kamala Harris' plan to enforce rent controls to make accommodation more affordable for Americans will end up destroying the nation's housing sector instead, says Elon Musk, a billionaire ally of her political rival Donald Trump.

"National rent control will destroy the incentive to build new housing," Musk wrote Tuesday on the X social media platform that he owns. On top of the post was a quote apparently pinned to

Harris that says: "When I'm president, I will take on corporate landlords that unfairly raise rents on working families." An online search by Sputnik could not verify the vice president having said those words, although she has used similar tough language against corporations in the housing sector.

Since becoming the standard-bearer for the Democratic Party in the November 5 presidential election, Harris has made housing affordability one of the tenets of her economic plan, pledging at her first major rally in August to "take on corporate landlords and cap unfair rent increases." Her economic plan also offers up to \$25,000 in reimbursement for first-time home buyers.

Research suggests that most Americans are rent-burdened, spending 30%, or more, of their income on accommodation. The median price of a house hit record highs in July, soaring to \$425,000. That has prevented most renters from becoming buyers, with industry experts saying Harris' reimbursement plan will not mean much to those having to put a larger down payment than \$25,000.

Musk, who has signaled an openness to joining Trump's cabinet as a "Department of Government Efficiency" secretary if the former Republican president beats Harris in the November election, said in his X post that America's housing industry will suffer along with its grocery sector if Democrats returned to the White House in 2025.

The reference to the grocery sector was in response to Harris' plan to fight price-gouging in food as well. The vice president has identified food inflation as one of the principal causes for prices getting out of control in 2022, as the excesses of the coronavirus pandemic — that included trillions of dollars of government relief spending and breakdown of supply chains — came together.

Musk's X post had the image of a laughing Harris, superimposed over empty supermarket aisles. The caption read: "National food price controls on supermarkets, which only have few percent profit margin, means empty shelves, just like Venezuela."

The post came hours before a debate between Harris and Trump that pundits said may have high stakes for the campaigns of both candidates.

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Biden on Whether Kiev May Use Long-Range Weapons Deep in Russia: 'We Are Working That Out'

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden said his administration is working out whether the United States will approve Ukraine using long-range weapons deep inside Russia.

"We're working that out right now," Biden said on Tuesday in response to a question about whether he will lift restrictions imposed on Ukraine on the use of long-range weapons deep inside Russia.

The United States may change its stance on restricting Kiev from striking deep inside Russia within weeks given that some administration members are already of that view and only need to convince the rest of the White House staff as well as Biden, The Times reported on Tuesday,

citing sources in the UK government.

The United States might change its stance before the UN General Assembly, which will be held in New York from September 22-23, the sources said.

Axios journalist Juliegrace Brufke meanwhile reported, citing US House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Michael McCaul, that Secretary of State Antony Blinken was expected to inform Ukraine during his upcoming trip to Kiev the permission to use US-made long-range ATACMS missiles against Russia.

Earlier on Tuesday, White House National Security Communications Adviser John Kirby reiterated the United States' position on not enabling or encouraging attacks inside Russia, especially not with US-made weapons.

Kirby made the statement after Ukraine conducted a large-scale drone attack on Russia that killed a woman in a Moscow suburb.

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Nebenzia Says Western States Have 'Selective Blindness' Towards Kiev in Pass 8 Years

UNITED NATIONS, September 11 (Sputnik) - The Western allies of Ukraine have chosen to not see the criminal activities of the Kiev regime in the past eight years, Russian Ambassador to the UN Vassily Nebenzia said in the Security Council chamber during a meeting on Ukraine.

"They have selective blindness, in these cases, of which they have demonstrated for all eight years while the Kiev regime... shelled civilian towns and cities in the Donbas," Nebenzia said on Tuesday.

Russia is no longer surprised by the "blatant double standards" of the Western countries, he added.

Western countries have ramped up their military and financial aid to Kiev since the start of Russia's military operation in Ukraine in February 2022. The Kremlin warns against continued arms deliveries to Kiev, saying it would lead to further escalation of the conflict. Russian officials have also warned that any cargo containing weapons for Ukraine will become a legitimate target for Russian strikes.

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Plurality of US Voters Choose Economy as Top Issue of 2024 Presidential Race - Poll

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - A plurality of US voters rank the economy as their top issue of the 2024 presidential election, according to a KFF poll.

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of voters list the economy and inflation as the most important issue determining their choice in the 2024 presidential race, the poll report said on Tuesday.

Twenty-two percent (22%) of voters list threats to democracy as their top issue, 12% list immigration and border security, and 7% list abortion, the poll report said.

However, approximately one-fifth of Democratic, Democratic-leaning and independent female

voters between the ages 18-49 list abortion as their most important voting issue, the poll report said.

A majority of voters, 52%, trust former US President Donald Trump to handle the economy and inflation better than US Vice President Kamala Harris, the poll report said. A majority, 54%, also trust Trump to better handle immigration and border security, the poll report said.

A majority of voters, 53%, prefer Harris on the issue of abortion, the poll report also said.

The poll surveyed 1,312 US adults from August 26-September 4, including 1,084 registered voters. The poll has a margin of error of plus-or-minus four percentage points for both the full sample and registered voters.

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SPUTNIK TOP STORIES OF THE DAY

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) -

UKRAINIAN DRONE ATTACKS AGAINST RUSSIA

* Kiev's attacks on residential buildings in Russia cannot be associated with military operations in any way, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Tuesday.

* Fragments of a Ukrainian drone that was shot down near Moscow fell on the territory of the Zhukovskiy airport but no casualties have been reported, the airport press service told Sputnik.

* The United States neither enables nor encourages attacks inside Russia and certainly not with US-made weapons, White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby said.

OPEC OIL PRODUCTION FORECAST

* OPEC has kept its forecast for the oil production growth in 2024 outside the organization at 1.23 million barrels per day and expects an increase to 53 million barrels per day, the organization said in a new report on Tuesday.

* Oil production in Russia in August decreased compared to the previous month by 29,000 barrels per day and amounted to 9.059 million barrels per day, the OPEC report said.

* OPEC has kept the forecast for the US oil and condensate production in 2024 unchanged and expects it at level of 13.2 million barrels per day, the report said.

MIDDLE EAST TENSIONS

* The Russian Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday that it will continue to work on the release of hostages, citizens of Russia and a number of other countries from the Gaza Strip.

* The United Nations opposes the recent Israeli airstrikes in a safe zone specifically designated by Israel, UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said.

* Israel rejects media accusations concerning covering up data by its forces' involvement in deaths of three hostages in the Gaza Strip in late 2023, an army representative told Sputnik.

* The killing of an American citizen by the IDF in the West Bank is not acceptable, and no one should be shot and killed for attending a protest, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said.

NEW WESTERN SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN, RUSSIA

* The United States is imposing restrictions on individuals and companies from Iran and Russia as part of a new sanctions package amid the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, the US Treasury Department announced on Tuesday.

* The United Kingdom has expanded the list of sanctions against Iran by adding several Iranian companies linked to the production of drones, according to a document published on the UK government's website.

* The United Kingdom expanded the list of sanctions against Russia, adding Russian aerospace forces and command of military transport aviation, according to a document published on the UK government's website.

VIETNAM-RUSSIA TALKS

* Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday that he hopes that Vietnamese President To Lam will take advantage of the invitation sent to him to participate in the BRICS summit in an outreach format in Kazan.

* Vietnam considers Russia to be one of its priority partners and wishes to intensify cooperation in all areas for the benefit of the two countries, Vietnamese Parliament President Tran Thanh Man said.

DEVELOPMENTS IN RUSSIA'S BORDER REGIONS

* The Russian armed forces have eliminated more than 11,800 Ukrainian soldiers and 93 tanks during military operations in the border areas of the Kursk region, the Russian Defense Ministry said on Tuesday.

* The Russian armed forces have the necessary plans to push Ukrainian troops out of the Kursk Region, but they are not for public discussion, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

* The Russian authorities have decided to limit transit transport traffic in the area of the Kursk nuclear power plant under the authority of the counter-terrorism operation regime, acting governor Alexei Smirnov said.

* Over 240 civilians, including 11 children, have been injured since the start of the Ukrainian offensive in Russia's Kursk region, acting deputy Health Minister of the Kursk Region Pavel Alimenko said.

RUSSIA'S OCEAN-2024 NAVAL EXERCISE

* Russia is conducting a large scale naval exercise - Ocean-2024 - for the first time in several decades, Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday.

* The Russian naval forces will practice defense exercises against large-scale aggression against Russia from the sea, Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov said.

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ANALYSIS - Boeing Starliner Failures Expose Erosion of US Space Industrial Base

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - The uncrewed return of Boeing's Starliner from the International Space Station (ISS) exposed weaknesses in the US space industrial base and quality control issues that have helped contribute to the demise of the ISS, analysts told Sputnik.

The Starliner, plagued by thruster failures and helium leaks, eventually landed safely last week after stranding astronauts Barry "Butch" Wilmore and Sunita "Suni" Williams. The two astronauts will serve on the ISS for more than eight months on what was supposed to have been a mission of only a few days.

Former Pentagon analyst and retired US Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Karen Kwiatkowski said the issues with Starliner and the ISS are but symptoms of a larger problem.

"Until a stable multipolar world balance fully emerges, and the US ends its quest for nuclear-backed world hegemony and abandons its self-assumed and poorly executed role of globocop, as well as gets its own financial house in order, the ISS is a red herring," Kwiatkowski told Sputnik.

Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space co-founder Bruce Gagnon said the ISS is reaching the end of its almost three decades of life as NASA's budget shrinks, US military spending expands, and the national debt is over \$35 trillion. The US, Gagnon argued, will not be able to sustain funding to meet space and tech requirements.

"The entire landscape of US economic dominance will collapse and the ability to continue with these expensive programs in the military or space missions to Moon, Mars and beyond will be impacted," Gagnon said.

According to former Pentagon analyst Chuck Spinney, the erosion of the US space industrial base meant NASA would have to increasingly rely on Russian cooperation to keep the ISS operating, especially with funding being diverted to support Ukraine.

"If we could end the Ukraine war, the Russians might keep it [ISS] alive for a while and even offer US astronauts rides to and from," he said.

NASA, Spinney added, is very skilled in building its programmatic social safety net and securing big budgets. However, NASA has a rather bleak track manned space flight record since the "glory days" of Apollo, Spinney said.

Kwiatkowski said NASA had always been a massive and overfunded bureaucracy that invested as much in its image as it did in actually benefiting Americans.

"I also expect that many of its functions have been co-opted by the surveillance state, and space defense," Kwiatkowski said.

BOEING QUALITY CRISIS

Gagnon predicted that the latest Starliner quality issues will hurt Boeing's prestige and may continue amid a potential lack of talent.

"Boeing obviously has huge internal leadership and quality control issues and it would appear to me that they will be losing a lot of business in the years ahead," Gagnon said. "As our education system increasingly fails to produce enough qualified and skilled younger workers these problems will persist."

Kwiatkowski suggested that Boeing may lose commercial contracts despite hiring eminent engineer Robert "Kelly" Ortberg as CEO last month.

"Boeing finally hired an experienced engineer to be the CEO, [but] I think it could be too little, too late," Kwiatkowski said.

Retired US Marine Colonel GI Wilson, a prominent military and technology analyst, advised that Boeing might have to settle for a vastly reduced role as a subcontractor to its long time, equally colossal rival Lockheed Martin. Wilson, however, believes the Starliner will likely "get fixed" under Boeing's new engineering leadership.

Rising Tide Foundation Vice President Matt warned that the inability to resolve technology failures could have fatal consequences.

"If Boeing's Starliner ever does fly again with a human crew after the embarrassing, disastrous launch [last week]... it will only be due to the fact that the agencies controlling today's American space policies wish to nail the final coffin in the spirit of manned space flight," Ehret said.

The Starliner crisis, Ehret added, also exemplifies how the transition of space flight to a "for-profit" paradigm has escalated risks.

"Whether Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Records, Jeff Bezos' Blue Origins, Elon Musk's SpaceX or Boeing's private space department, cutting budgets, maximizing profits for shareholders render space flight a dangerous endeavor available primarily for the benefit of the uber rich, instead of something tied to the general welfare," Ehret concluded.

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US Senator Johnson Says Russian Economy Continues to Grow Despite Western Sanctions

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - The Russian economy grew in 2023 and is being expected to do so in 2024 despite the sanctions imposed by the collective West, which have turned out to be ineffective, US Senator Ron Johnson said on Tuesday.

"Far from failing, the Russian economy has defied Western sanctions, growing at an estimated 3.6% in 2023 is expected to grow at 3.2% this year," Johnson told the US Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.

Russia's dependence on the US dollar has decreased and that change paved the way for China to fill the void, Johnson said.

Despite the US sanctions targeting Russia's crude oil exports, the country has overcome them by selling crude oil to China and India, Johnson added.

Russian Foreign Ministry's Economic Cooperation Department Director Dmitry Biriachevsky said in September that Russia is no longer dependent on the US dollar.

The share of the dollar and euro in settlements on Russian export operations is currently less than 20%.

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US Senator Says 2023 Saw Weakening of US Dollar Role as Primary Reserve Currency

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) – Senator Ron Johnson said on Tuesday that the year of 2023 saw the role of the US dollar as the primary reserve currency weakened as a result of the sanctions imposed on Moscow for its special military operation in Ukraine.

"In 2023, US dollar's role as the world's premier and primary reserve currency has weakened, with our national debt exceeding \$35 trillion. This reality should concern us all," Johnson told a Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.

Moreover, Johnson believes that the United States is heading towards losing its position as the world's reserve currency and called it a "serious problem."

Earlier in September, former US President Donald Trump voiced a similar view by stating that sanctions ultimately undermine the value of the US dollar and its global significance.

In an interview with Tucker Carlson in February, Russian President Vladimir Putin called the US's use of the dollar as a foreign policy tool one of the biggest strategic mistakes by the US leadership. Even American allies are now downsizing their US dollar reserves, with more countries shifting to national currencies in bilateral trade, Putin said.

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US Defense Official Confirms Nuclear-Powered Submarine Georgia Deployed to Middle East

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - A US defense official on Tuesday confirmed to Sputnik that the US nuclear-powered submarine Georgia has arrived in the Central Command area of operation, which primarily includes the Middle East.

"Yes," the official said when asked to confirm reports about the submarine's arrival in the Middle East area.

US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin last month ordered the Georgia to deploy to the Middle East.

Defense Department spokesperson Patrick Ryder said earlier that the United States remains postured to support the defense of Israel and US assets in the Middle East amid the current unrest in the region.

The United States has positioned approximately 18 warships, including two aircraft carriers, around the Middle East region as it aims to deter a potential Iranian retaliatory attack against Israel.

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Pentagon Says Will Monitor Russia-China Naval Exercise, Poses No Threat to US or NATO

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - The United States will monitor the joint Russian-Chinese naval exercise in East Asia later this month but it does not consider the drills to be a threat to the US mainland or to any NATO allies, US Defense Department spokesperson Maj. Gen. Patrick Ryder said on Tuesday.

"While Russia prefers to include foreign participants in such exercises, we believe China will be the only true participant with a few other countries only observing," Ryder said during a press briefing. "The US has been tracking this planned exercise for some time. It poses no threat to the US homeland or the NATO alliance."

The United States will continue to monitor developments related to the planned exercise and remain in close communication with its NATO allies and partners on this matter, Ryder added.

The Russian Defense Ministry said earlier that its naval forces had launched the planned strategic exercise "Ocean-2024" in the Pacific and Arctic Oceans as well as the Mediterranean, Caspian and Baltic Seas.

Units of Russia's Pacific Fleet and the Chinese naval forces will practice defending sea lanes in the Primorsky direction, the Russian Defense Ministry said.

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Republicans Should Block Govt. Funding if Democrats Oppose Election Security Bill - Trump

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - Former President Donald Trump said on Tuesday that Republican lawmakers should oppose a temporary government funding bill if Democrats block election security legislation.

The US Congress must pass appropriations bills or a stopgap funding bill before the end of the month to prevent a government shutdown. House Republican leadership proposed a six-month continuing resolution that also includes the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act, which requires proof of US citizenship to register to vote in federal elections.

"If Republicans in the House, and Senate, don't get absolute assurances on Election Security, they should in no way, shape, or form, go forward with a continuing resolution on the budget. The Democrats are trying to 'stuff' voter registrations with illegal aliens. Don't let it happen - close it down," Trump said in a statement via Truth Social.

The White House said that President Joe Biden would veto House Republicans' continuing resolution and expressed opposition to the inclusion of the Save Act in the legislation.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell said on Tuesday that shutting down the government is always a bad idea, in response to a question about Trump's statement.

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US Issues New Sanctions Targeting Iran, Russia - Treasury

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - The United States is imposing restrictions on individuals and companies from Iran and Russia as part of a new sanctions package related to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, the US Department of the Treasury announced in a press release on Tuesday.

"Today, in response to Iran's ongoing military support, including the recent delivery of ballistic missiles, to Russia for its war of aggression against Ukraine, the US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control is designating ten individuals and six entities based in Iran and Russia and identifying four vessels as blocked property that are enabling Iran's delivery of weapons components and weapons systems, including unmanned aerial vehicles

and close-range ballistic missiles, to Russia," the release said.

The new sanctions target ten individuals, seven entities and nine vessels from Iran and Russia, the release said.

The sanctions affected two companies registered in Russia, Vafa Wholesale Ltd. and Sea River Service LLC, and five Iranian companies, including Azadegan Transportation Company, Talieh Sabz Jehan Group Company and Farzanegan Propulsion Systems Design Bureau for aiding Russia's cruise missile development, the release said.

In addition, the Treasury Department imposed sanctions on Russian national Dzhamaaldin Pashaev for allegedly being involved in Russian military exports and nine Iranian nationals, including Bahrami Ebrahim, Eini Sarkalleh Gholamreza, Ja'Farabadi Ali, Katebi Ruhollah, and Noorohmadi Masoud, the release said.

The Treasury Department also changed the designation of the previously sanctioned Iran Air.

In a separate statement, the State Department announced that it has imposed sanctions on Iran's flagship air carrier for its alleged role in transporting goods on behalf of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) and to Russia.

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Omaha Police Says High School Goes on Lockdown Following Shooting Incident

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) – The Omaha Police Department in the US state of Nebraska said on Tuesday that it was investigating a shooting that took place at a high school with at least one known victim.

"We are actively investigating a shooting that occurred at or near Omaha Northwest High School. There is reported to be one victim at this time," the police said in an X post.

The police added that the suspect individual has been taken into custody and the school is now secure with no threat to the community.

The incident at Northwest High School took place at around 12:30 p.m. local time (17:30 GMT), according to local media reports.

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US Secret Service Says Assistant Director Plati Retirement 'Personal Decision'

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - The US Secret Service (USSS) told Sputnik on Tuesday that USSS Assistant Director for the Office of Protective Operations Michael Plati's choice to retire was a personal decision, despite reports that he was asked to step down.

"Assistant Director Plati was not asked to resign or retire by anyone. This was a personal decision that he has made and we thank him for his 27 years of dedicated service to the federal government," a USSS spokesperson said in a statement.

Earlier on Tuesday, Fox News reported that Plati was asked by senior leadership to retire from his position, following the assassination attempt against former US President Donald Trump.

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EIA Says Brent to Average \$82 per Barrel This Year as Oil Benchmark Falls Below \$70

WASHINGTON, August 10 (Sputnik) - Brent crude is expected to average \$82 per barrel this year, the US Energy Information Administration (EIA) said on Tuesday as the global benchmark for oil neared a three-year low beneath \$70 per barrel.

"We expect the Brent crude oil spot price to average \$82/b in 4Q24 and average \$84/b in 2025," the EIA, the premier agency for energy research in the United States, said in its Short-Term Energy Outlook report.

UK-origin Brent crude fell to as low as \$68.69 per barrel in New York trading Tuesday, a bottom not seen since December 2021, amid worries about a potential oversupply in oil that topped concerns over the US stock market and Chinese economy.

With just a third of September's trade in the books, Brent is already down 12.5% for the month. That was its biggest monthly drop since November 2021, when it fell 16%. For 2024, the global crude benchmark has lost almost 11%, after rallying more than 20% earlier in the year.

Despite the gloom in Brent pricing, the EIA said it expected the crude market to rebound toward the year end as supplies tighten from output rationing by the biggest oil producers in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

"Ongoing withdrawals from global oil inventories will push prices back above \$80/b this month," the EIA said. "More oil will be taken out of inventories in the fourth quarter of 2024 than we previously expected."

This was because OPEC+, the global oil producing alliance consisting of the 13-member Saudi led OPEC and ten independent oil producers led by Russia, plan to withhold any production increase until December, the EIA said.

Another two-and-a-half months of production rationing that should clear any overhang in crude stockpiles and bring supply-demand into better balance, the EIA said.

"Even before OPEC+ announced that it will delay production increases until December, we expected a significant reduction in global oil inventories through the end of this year," the EIA said. "We now expect more oil will be taken out of inventories than we previously expected."

The agency said global oil inventories were expected to fall by 900,000 barrels per day in the third quarter of 2024 and continue decreasing by more than 1.0 million barrels daily through the first quarter of 2025.

The EIA seems more sanguine about OPEC supply-demand than the producer alliance itself.

OPEC in its own monthly report on Tuesday said it expects demand to grow by about 2 million barrels per day in 2024, some 80,000 barrels slower than its previous forecast.

For 2025, the group sees demand growth at 1.7 million barrels per day, some 40,000 lower than previously anticipated.

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US Deeply Worried Over Increased Sharing of Military Tech Between Russia, China - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - The United States is becoming deeply concerned about increased cooperation between Russia and China on the sharing of military technology, the Financial Times reported on Tuesday.

The report said that US Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell told reporters that Russia is allegedly sharing military technology with China, including stealth and surveillance.

Campbell made his remarks during a visit to Brussels on Monday to meet European Union, NATO, and Belgian officials.

This level of cooperation between Russia and China would have a negative and concerning impact on the security of the United States and its allies, Campbell said.

Campbell claimed that there's "significant" collaboration between Russia and China in the areas of design and application, according to the report.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry has previously emphasized that China is focused on the path of its own development, and the protection of its own sovereignty, and will bring more stability around the world through external cooperation.

Moreover, Beijing has repeatedly rejected Western claims accusing China of facilitating the supply of goods to the Russian Federation, which it is allegedly using in the special military operation in Ukraine, urging them to refrain from groundless accusations.

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US Issues New Sanctions Targeting Iran, Russia - Treasury

(Updates with more details in para 2, 6, 7; modifies para 5)

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The new sanctions target ten individuals, seven entities and nine vessels from Iran and Russia, the release said.

The sanctions affected two companies registered in Russia, Vafa Wholesale Ltd. and Sea River Service Llc, and five Iranian companies, including Azadegan Transportation Company, Talieh Sabz Jehan Group Company and Farzanegan Propulsion Systems Design Bureau for aiding

Russia's cruise missile development, the release said.

In addition, the Treasury Department imposed sanctions on Russian national Dzhemal Pashaev for allegedly being involved in Russian military exports and nine Iranian nationals, including Bahrami Ebrahim, Eini Sarkalleh Gholamreza, Ja'Farabadi Ali, Katebi Ruhollah, and Noorohmadi Masoud, the release said.

The Treasury Department also changed the designation of the previously sanctioned Iran Air. In a separate statement, the State Department announced that it has imposed sanctions on Iran's flagship air carrier for its alleged role in transporting goods on behalf of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) and to Russia.

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UN Condemns Israeli Airstrikes in Designated Humanitarian Zone in Gaza - Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, September 10 (Sputnik) - The United Nations opposes the recent Israeli airstrikes in a zone specifically designated by Israel, the UN Spokesman Stephane Dujarric said on Tuesday.

"The Secretary-General is deeply alarmed by the continued loss of life in Gaza. He strongly condemns today's Israeli air strike in an Israeli-designated zone for displaced persons in Khan Younis. The use of heavy weapons in densely populated areas is unconscionable," Dujarric said in the UN briefing.

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SpaceX Says US Regulations on Flight Tests Threaten American Leadership in Space

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - The rigorous process to gain US federal approval to conduct test flights for the Starship project threatens the United States' position as a leader in the space domain, SpaceX said in a statement on Tuesday.

"The more we fly safely, the faster we learn; the faster we learn, the sooner we realize full and rapid rocket reuse. Unfortunately, we continue to be stuck in a reality where it takes longer to do the government paperwork to license a rocket launch than it does to design and build the actual hardware. This should never happen and directly threatens America's position as the leader in space," the company said.

SpaceX made its public outcry in light of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) pushing back the company's plans to conduct its fifth Starship flight test this month to late November due to environmental impact concerns.

"Unfortunately, instead of focusing resources on critical safety analysis and collaborating on rational safeguards to protect both the public and the environment, the licensing process has been repeatedly derailed by issues ranging from the frivolous to the patently absurd," SpaceX said. "At times, these roadblocks have been driven by false and misleading reporting."

The misleading reporting against the Starship program is based on "bad-faith hysteries" from

online detractors or special interest groups who have presented poorly constructed science as fact, SpaceX said.

The Starship spacecraft and Super Heavy booster rocket have been ready to launch for the fifth flight test since the first week of August, in which it will attempt to return the booster to the launch site in Boca Chica, Texas, and catch it in mid-air with retractable arms connected to the launch tower.

SpaceX underscored that it is critical that the US government paves the way for more rapid testing in order to meet commitments to national priorities like NASA's Artemis program.

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Global Oil Price Near 3-Year Low As Brent Crude Dips Beneath \$70 Per Barrel

NEW YORK, September 10 (Sputnik) - The global price of oil is closing in on a three-year low, with benchmark Brent crude dipping beneath \$70 per barrel on Tuesday to touch a bottom not seen since December 2021 amid a potential oversupply that topped concerns about the US stock market and the Chinese economy.

"Oil prices have not only wiped out their [annual] gains [for 2024] in one of the worst September performances in stocks since the 1950's, but we are also seeing the price movement suggest a collapsing Chinese and US economy, causing a run on the oil bank," said Phil Flynn, energy analyst at the Price Futures Group brokerage in Chicago.

With two-and-a-half hours to the daily settlement in New York trade, UK-origin Brent crude was at \$69 per barrel, down \$2.84, or 4%. With just a third of September's trade in the books, Brent is already down 12.5% for the month, its most since November 2021, when it fell 16%. For 2024, the global crude benchmark has lost almost 11%, after rallying more than 20% earlier in the year.

US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude slid by \$3.15, or 4.6%. For the month so far, WTI has lost 10.2%, its most since a 10.8% tumble in October 2023. Year-to-date, the US crude benchmark is down almost 9%, after rallying more than 20% earlier.

Oil's latest slump came on oversupply concerns after a monthly supply-demand projection released by OPEC, which groups the world's biggest oil producers.

OPEC said it expects demand to grow by about 2 million barrels per day in 2024, some 80,000 barrels slower than its previous forecast. The group sees demand growth of 1.7 million barrels per day over the next year, some 40,000 lower than originally anticipated.

OPEC had cut its demand outlook in August due to softening consumption in China, the world's largest crude importer.

Wall Street's key stock indexes fell as much as 6% on the week, their most in over a year, as traders and investors agonized over weakening US jobs numbers and whether earnings at highly-priced technology companies would live up to valuation.

China's economy, meanwhile, has been stuttering for months. Prices of newly-constructed homes fell 4.9% in July from a year earlier, the fastest drop in nine years, according to calculations by Reuters. Unemployment ticked up by 0.2% in July to 5.2%, with the 16-24 age group, particularly, hit by a 17% jobless rate — the highest since such data became available in

December.

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Delta Air Lines Planes Collide At Taxiway Intersection, No Injuries Reported - Statement

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) — A collision occurred when two Delta Air Lines planes made contact at the intersection of taxiways, the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL) said in a statement on Tuesday.

"Two aircraft made contact at the intersection of taxiways E and H on the north airfield," the statement said.

The statement added that no injuries were reported, as one plane taxied to its gate and passengers from the other were bused to a different concourse.

According to a Fox report, Delta said that it is cooperating with the NTSB (National Transportation Safety Board) and other authorities regarding the incident.

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US Issues New Sanctions Targeting Iran, Russia - Treasury

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - The United States is imposing restrictions on individuals and companies from Iran and Russia as part of a new sanctions package amid the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, the US Treasury Department announced on Tuesday.

The new sanctions target ten individuals, seven entities and nine vessels from Iran and Russia, the Treasury Department said in a press release.

The sanctions affected two companies registered in Russia, Vafa Wholesale Ltd. and Sea River Service Llc, and five Iranian companies, including Azadegan Transportation Company, Talieh Sabz Jehan Group Company and Farzanegan Propulsion Systems Design Bureau, the release said.

The Treasury Department also imposed sanctions on Russian national Dzhamaldin Pashaev and nine Iranian nationals, including Bahrami Ebrahim, Eini Sarkalleh Gholamreza, Ja'Farabadi Ali, Katebi Ruhollah, and Noorohmadi Masoud, the release also said.

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Fed Slashes by Nearly Half Proposed Capital Hike to Protect US Banks - Vice Chair

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - The Federal Reserve is cutting by nearly half the capital requirement increase proposed for the largest US banks, Vice Chair for Supervision Michael Barr said on Tuesday.

"Banks with assets between \$100 [billion] and \$250 billion would no longer be subject to the

endgame changes," Barr said in a speech at an industry event in Washington, adding that capital requirements for them would increase by 9% instead rather than the initially intended 19%.

The "endgame" refers to the final round of capital adequacy proposed by the Bank for International Settlements in Switzerland to protect the global banking industry from crises.

The capital hike would affect eight of the biggest US banks with assets of between \$100 billion and \$250 billion, including JPMorgan Chase & Co, Bank of America and Citigroup - to cushion them against financial shocks.

US banks had argued that the steep 19% requirement suggested by the Fed would put them on weaker footing against international rivals and nonbank lenders, hurting the US economy and competitiveness.

The change is largely seen as handing a victory to financial institutions which argued that the initial prerequisite would hurt their competitiveness as well as the US economy.

It is expected to assuage the concerns of Wall Street banks, which had campaigned against the initial quantum of increase when the Fed proposed it in July 2023 under the so-called Basel III Endgame.

Barr acknowledged in his speech that there are benefits as well as costs to increasing capital requirements.

"The changes we intend to make will bring these two important objectives into better balance, in light of the feedback we have received," Barr said.

The vice chair also said the revision to the endgame rules will cover all major areas of banking risk, including credit risk, operational risk and market risk.

US banks with assets of around \$100 billion but below \$250 billion - still recognized as large but not "supersized" - would face a capital requirement of between 3% and 4%, Barr said.

All other US banks would require a capital cushion of just 0.5%.

In June, Barr said stress tests on US banks showed the large banks were well positioned to weather a severe recession and continue lending to households and businesses even in major economic downturn.

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White House Says Some Republicans Promoting 'Racially Charged' Conspiracy Theories

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) — White House National Security Advisor John Kirby said on Tuesday some Republican officials are promoting divisive and racially charged conspiracy theories, citing recent claims about Haitian migrants in Ohio.

"What's deeply concerning to us is you've got now elected officials in the Republican Party pushing, you know, yet another conspiracy theory that's just seeking to divide people based on lies, and, let's be honest, based on an element of racism. I think all Americans should expect more and better from the people that they're electing to represent them," Kirby said during a press briefing.

Kirby added that there should be a meaningful discussion about developing legal pathways for people to enter the country and fair opportunities for those who come legally, instead of the "BS

being pushed out there."

Over the weekend and into Monday, social media users shared allegations claiming that Haitian migrants in Springfield, Ohio, were killing and eating local pets and birds. Some of these rumors appear to stem from local social media groups and have been linked to an August report from Canton, Ohio, where a woman was charged with allegedly killing and eating a cat.

The Springfield Police Division told the Springfield News-Sun they are aware of the allegations but do not currently consider it a priority, though US officials have expressed concern. The Trump-Vance campaign tied the rumors to the Biden-Harris administration's immigration policies, alleging that similar situations could arise in other cities if Harris is elected president.

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US House Democratic Chair Says Important to Pass Shorter Stopgap Government Funding Bill

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - US House Democratic Caucus Chair Pete Aguilar said on Tuesday that it is important for the House of Representatives to pass a shorter-term stopgap government funding bill than has been proposed by House Republicans.

House Republican leadership backed a six-month continuing resolution (CR) to fund the federal government before the end of the month. The government will shut down if lawmakers fail to pass appropriations bills or a stopgap measure.

"I think what is important is to have a shorter CR to get our work done and to have something done before the end of the year for the new Congress to begin," Aguilar said during a press conference.

The CR backed by House Republicans also includes the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act, which requires proof of US citizenship to register to vote in federal elections.

The White House said on Monday that US President Joe Biden would veto the legislation. House Republicans know that the bill has no chance of becoming law, Aguilar said.

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Nearly Two-Thirds of US Voters Very Likely to Watch First Trump-Harris Debate - Poll

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - Nearly two-thirds of likely voters in the United States are very likely to watch the first debate between former US President Donald Trump and US Vice President Kamala Harris, according to a Rasmussen Reports poll released Tuesday.

Trump and Harris are set to participate in an ABC debate at 9:00 p.m. ET (4:00 a.m. GMT) on Tuesday in Philadelphia.

Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondents are very likely to watch the debate and 83% are likely to watch it, the poll report said.

Just 14% of respondents are unlikely to watch the debate, the poll report added.

The poll surveyed 1,070 likely US voters from September 2-4. The poll has a margin of error of plus-or-minus three percentage points with a 95% confidence level.

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Pentagon on Ukraine Drone Attack in Russia: Kiev Conducts Operations Independently

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) - A US Defense Department spokesperson told Sputnik on Tuesday in light of Ukraine's large-scale drone attack in Russia that Kiev selects its own targets and carries out its military operations independently.

"Ukraine selects [its] own targets and military pursuits independently," the spokesperson said.

White House National Security Communications Adviser John Kirby said in earlier remarks that the United States is not enabling or encouraging attacks inside Russia, especially not with US-made weapons.

Earlier on Tuesday, the Russian Defense Ministry said the country's air defenses intercepted 144 drones launched by Ukraine overnight toward the Russian regions of Bryansk, Kursk, Tula, Belgorod, Kaluga, Voronezh, Lipetsk, Oryol and the Moscow suburbs. Of the total number of drones that attacked Russia, 20 were detected over the Moscow region.

Moscow Region Governor Andrei Vorobyov said that a woman was killed as a result of a drone attack in the Ramenskoye urban district of the Moscow region.

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US to Sanctions Russian, Iranian Individuals and Entities Later Today – White House Kirby

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) – The United States will impose sanctions on Russian and Iranian individuals and entities allegedly involved in the delivery of weapons and components for drones and ballistic missiles, White House National Security Communications Adviser John Kirby said on Tuesday.

"We and our allies are ... going to be designating individuals and entities in Iran and Russia that are involved in the actual delivery of weapons components and weapons systems, including UAVs, and again, these close-range ballistic missiles," Kirby said during a virtual press conference.

Earlier on Tuesday US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the US would impose new sanctions on Iran after Washington confirmed reports that Russia had received shipments of ballistic missiles from the Islamic Republic.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry dismissed on Monday US media reports about Iran allegedly supplying Russia with weapons. Last week, CNN reported that Iran allegedly transferred short-range ballistic missiles to Russia for use in military operations in Ukraine.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, commenting on the CNN report, said that such information does not always correspond to reality.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani previously said that any attempts to link the Russia-Iran cooperation with the Ukrainian conflict was made solely for the purpose of justifying the West's continued supply of weapons to Kiev

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us to impose sanctions on individuals and entities in russia as well as Iran later today - white house's kirby

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Canada Starts Tariff Consultations on Chinese Critical Mineral Items, Batteries – Ministry

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) – The Canadian Government has launched a 30-day consultation period to determine whether it will seek to impose new tariffs on solar and critical mineral products as well as batteries and semiconductors of Chinese origin, the country's Finance Department said on Tuesday.

"Canada is today launching a second 30-day consultation, from September 10, 2024, to October 10, 2024, on potential surtaxes in response to unfair Chinese trade practices," the department said. "Specifically, the Government of Canada is seeking views on the potential application of a surtax on critical mineral products, batteries and parts, solar products, and semiconductors, as well as the timing of the coming into force of any potential measures."

Tariffs could potentially be imposed with the aim of further curbing the alleged unfair competition from Chinese producers and protecting the Canadian critical manufacturing sectors, the statement said. Ottawa accuses China of engaging in practices enabled by its purported intentional and state-directed policy of oversupply.

In late-August, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that Canada was imposing a 100% surtax on Chinese-made EVs and a 25% surtax on steel and aluminum imports from China to curb what it called "unfair competition" from Chinese EV producers.

In the wake of those surtaxes, China's Embassy in Ottawa told Sputnik that Beijing condemned the measures and rejected the Canadian tariffs, stressing that it would safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises

On Friday, the Chinese Ministry of Commerce informed it had lodged a consultation request at the World Trade Organization over Canada's decision to impose tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles.

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US Does Not Enable, Encourage Ukrainian Attacks Inside Russia – White House

WASHINGTON, September 10 (Sputnik) – The United States neither enables nor encourages attacks inside Russia and certainly not with US-made weapons, White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby said on Tuesday.

"We are not enabling or encouraging attacks inside Russia, certainly not with US-made weapons, that's still our policy," Kirby said during a press briefing.

The Russian Defense Ministry said earlier on Tuesday that Russian air defenses intercepted 144 drones launched by Ukraine overnight toward the Russian regions of Bryansk, Kursk, Tula, Belgorod, Kaluga, Voronezh, Lipetsk, Oryol and the Moscow suburbs, adding that 20 drones were over the Moscow Region. Moscow Region Governor Andrei Vorobyov, in turn, said that a woman died as a result of a drone attack in the Ramenskoye urban district.