

9/11/24 Wednesday

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Presidential Debate Aftermath: 'The Only Winners Were the Donors, the Military Industrial Complex'

Harris and Trump reportedly greeted each other at the 9/11 ceremony by shaking hands - as did Biden - but the three "mostly stood silently" while victims of the 9/11 attacks had their names read aloud.

US President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump made a rare, joint appearance on Wednesday to mark the 23rd anniversary of the 9/11 attacks during which nearly 3,000 people were killed, the [Wall Street Journal](#) reported. The ceremony, located in Manhattan, came the day after Harris and Trump faced off in a presidential debate in Philadelphia. According to the report, Trump interacted very little with Biden and Harris and was separated from the two by former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

US Republicans voiced [frustration](#) that the former president failed to challenge Harris' political record, and instead allowed his own controversies to take hold in the debate as Harris successfully got under his skin. Meanwhile, Harris doubled down on one of her most unfavorable policies, US defense spending for [Israel](#), and maintained the Biden administration's status quo to "always give Israel the ability to defend itself".

Craig 'Pasta' Jardula, a political analyst, joined [The Final Countdown](#) on Wednesday to discuss the debate in a wider context as it relates to foreign policy.

"You know, the only winners last night were the donors, the military industrial complex, the bankers, big pharma, and, of course, the Zionists. The losers last night, unfortunately, were the American people," Jardula explained. "... in 2016 [US voters] looked at [Trump] because he was at least saying, 'we're going to get rid of NATO. We're going to go after the donors.' He separated himself from all the Republicans out there, but now... It's real sad."

"We had thought there was a chance that this guy would disband and get rid of NATO. None of that's there anymore. Now, everything seems to be blamed on the immigrants... And this kind of mentality when you can sit out there and try to act as if all immigrants are going to eat cats and dogs," he added. "...that's where his campaign is right now. I mean, it's just everything is blamed on the immigrant. [...] It's just ridiculous."

"...[meanwhile] Kamala Harris repeated every single stupid trope out there you can repeat. She praised warmongers like John McCain and Dick Cheney and Republican, hardcore Republicans, and talked about how she had 200 of them endorsing her candidacy. She also pushed back against Trump, some of his best decisions that he made, some of his best policies when he tried to make peace with North Korea," Jardula explained.

The US Department of Defense (DOD) has \$2.10 trillion in budgetary resources which makes up 14.4% of the Fiscal Year 2024's US federal budget, according to [USAspending.gov](#).

Sputnik's Ted Rall notes that the US defense budget is a "lot of wasted money" and that were it to be redistributed, basic needs could be cared for in the US including college expenses as well as physical and mental care.

"She's a warmonger to the nines. There's no sign of ending the war in the Ukraine. She's all for it. And she's still using that same tagline again. If we don't stop Putin now, he's going to go into Poland. People don't believe that. They're tired of this. They're done with this," he added. "The American people, they're the ones who lost."

"But even Harris' plans, this opportunity economy she talks about, and then talks about a tax credit. Well, hey, a tax credit is all fine and dandy, but it's a short term solution. We have no industry in the US. We don't make anything anymore," the analyst said. "We don't fix anything. NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement] has shipped our jobs offers for quite some time. Donald Trump really doesn't have an economic plan. His economic plan is to drill baby drill and drive your energy costs down as much as possible. I mean, so what's that going to do?" However, [\\$3.07 trillion](#) in budgetary resources is available to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) which makes up 21% of the US federal budget for Fiscal Year 2024. But even with trillions of dollars in resources, Americans' health pales in comparison when compared to "almost all of the peer countries," a [study](#) published in the National Library of Medicine, revealed.

Americans have shorter life spans than almost all of their peer countries, and that difference in life expectancy has been growing, the study revealed. The US also experiences the highest infant mortality rate of high-income countries and ranks poorly on other birth outcomes including low birth weight. The US also ranks poorly - when compared to other countries - regarding other health concerns that include: injuries and homicides, adolescent pregnancy and STIs, HIV and AIDS, drug-related mortality, obesity and diabetes, heart disease, chronic lung disease, and disabilities like arthritis.

"...I don't want to lead into conspiracy theories, but there's a lot of people who feel that, you know, 9/11 was an inside job because it allowed us to open up the door and go into the Middle East and set it on fire. And, at the end of the day, it did do that," Jardula said. "I mean, you were mentioning all those countries like, oh, Afghanistan. I think a lot of people bought it because they thought that's where Osama bin Laden was hiding out. But Iraq? The nation of Iraq? Millions dead or displaced. I mean, it's just crazy."

Liberals have seemingly done a 180 spin in their view of former Vice President Dick Cheney after the Republican threw his support behind Harris. Talk show host Piers Morgan told [Fox & Friends](#) that liberals have gone to "completely preposterous" lengths in their opposition of Trump. The Brit questioned why Harris is opening her arms to the conservative politician who served under former President George W. Bush, and said it was "hypocritical".

[Cheney](#) has been ridiculed by Americans, particularly Liberals and Democrats, for his involvement in the Iraq War. The former VP reportedly "contributed to the early dysfunction on the ground" at the start of the US invasion. In a 2007 article, a US journalist revealed that Cheney undercut the CIA by instructing subordinates in that agency to "stovepipe raw intelligence directly to his office". And that he also made an effort to establish an alternative intelligence agency within the Pentagon. The former VP has also been criticized for his advocacy and use of torture, as well as illegally spying on and monitoring innocent Americans. "There are people who have lost loved ones in the towers that never ever got compensated. I mean, I'm sure there was some compensation for a lot of other families, but it's just the same old, same old when it comes to our country."

"At the end of the day, the empire is the root of all problems. Whatever we do abroad overseas, we'll bring back home and do at home. And, you know, the reason why we have so many people who hate us is because we occupy their territory. We have bases all over the place. And that was cut out of the conversations last night. In fact, it was encouraged to be more of a neocon, especially if you're looking at Kamala Harris," he added.

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Cooking Cats and Dogs

The claims of immigrants in Ohio eating people's pets originates from a photo of a man walking along a street while carrying a goose. While there has been no official evidence of goose, ducks, dogs or cats in the US state being eaten by Haitian immigrants, one photo seems to have spun the rumor into a national headline.

Former President Donald Trump made claims that Haitian immigrants in Ohio are abducting and eating people's cats and dogs. Officials have said there is no evidence of immigrants eating cats and dogs, however Trump doubled down on his claim and accused Springfield, Ohio of being at the center of this dramatic issue.

"In Springfield, they're eating the dogs," Trump said during his presidential debate with Vice President Kamala Harris in the city of Philadelphia. "The people that came in. They're eating the cats. They're eating the pets of the people that live there."

The Springfield city manager said no credible reports of specific claims of pets being harmed, injured, or abused by individuals in the immigrant community have been made, said David Muir, an ABC News anchor and American journalist who moderated the debate on [Tuesday](#). Despite being fact-checked, Trump's vice-presidential candidate, Senator JD Vance of Ohio, repeated the rumor this week.

The claim seems to originate from a social media post in which a netizen said their "neighbor's daughter's friend" had lost her cat. And then one day she came home from work and looked at her neighbor's house, "where Haitians live" and saw her cat "hanging from a branch, like you'd do a deer for butchering, and they were carving it up to eat". The social media user also claimed that they are doing this to dogs, as well as ducks and geese at the nearby park. They also claimed that they were told this by "rangers and police".

While there has been no evidence to substantiate these anti-immigrant claims, a photo has been circulating online of a man in Columbus, Ohio carrying a dead goose. The man who took the photo in late July says he regrets having done so because it's being "weaponized to use against immigrants". He said he took the photo because it was not "something you see every day."

"I wish I never took it, for sure. And I hate that the picture that I took is being weaponized to use against immigrants, or really, any other group. They always have to have somebody to use as a weapon. Some group to be the bad guy," the anonymous photographer told an Ohio [news outlet](#).

"Then all of (these claims) supposedly they're going and killing all of the wildlife and whatever. That's ridiculous. But people see things that are spread and have no idea what the truth is, but

they spread it like it's the truth. And I feel like the only person that knows what really happened to the goose is the guy that had the goose," he added.

A [caller](#) in Springfield, Ohio did make a police report saying that he saw a group of "Haitian people, there were about four of 'em, they all had geese in their hand," while he was walking to work. He said two men and two women, each of whom had one goose in their hands, got in a truck and drove away. The call was placed on August 26, according to a police report that was reviewed by [The Federalist](#).

That same month, a resident complained to city officials that Haitians are "running into trash cans" and "running into buildings," "flipping cars in the middle of the street". "I don't know how, y'all can be comfortable with this," the resident told city officials. "They're in the park, grabbing up ducks by the neck and cutting their heads off and eating them."

But Alimemby Estimable, who is 19 and graduated from Springfield High School, says he hasn't seen evidence to back up these rumors.

"I've been seeing a lot of people talking about a lot of stuff that's not accurate. You know, saying, like, all Haitians are cutting ducks' necks and eating them at the park and like, they're running into trash cans and homes and stuff. I ain't never seen a Haitian do that before. I'm just keep it real, because I'm a Haitian myself," he told [USA Today](#).

At the heart of the matter is this truth: between 15,000 and 20,000 Haitian immigrants have settled into Springfield after being forced to flee from gang violence which erupted in Haiti last year. The Biden administration has allowed this surge of migrants under a humanitarian parole program.

The surging [violence](#) there is, of course, the result of corrupt leadership and a weakened democratic institution that the US has supported. And even since Haiti became independent in 1804, the US has consistently meddled in Haitian politics to form it to its own liking.

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More FDNY Members Died From 9/11-Related Illnesses Than Those Killed in Attack

Wednesday marks the 23rd anniversary of the 9/11 attacks when terrorists hijacked US passenger jets and crashed them into the Twin Towers in New York City, causing the buildings to collapse and killing thousands.

On the day that the Twin Towers fell in New York, 343 members of the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) were killed, officials said. However, the FDNY has added the names of 32 more individuals who died from health issues they developed from their rescue efforts at the World Trade Center, which brings that number's total to more than 360.

The number of officials who died while working to rescue victims on the day of 9/11 is now less than those who have died since then, due to Ground-Zero-related illnesses. A department spokesperson said the names added include firefighters, paramedics, EMTs, civilian employees and the chaplain of the department, [AXIOS](#) reported.

"As we do every year, we will reflect on the 343 members who died that day, and we will be sobered in knowing that those insurmountable losses did not end at the World Trade Center site," Fire Commissioner Robert S. Tucker said during a ceremony.

"Instead, we have seen our members become sick because of time they spent working in the rescue and recovery."

The 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund (VCF) provides funding for those who suffer from illnesses related to the September 11 attacks. The VCF said it has awarded \$12.8 billion to over 56,600 claimants since former President Obama allowed the fund to be reactivated in 2011.

During a [news conference](#), Lieutenant Jim Brosi, the president of the FDNY Uniformed Fire Officers Association, said he is pushing for the support of the 9/11 Responder and Survivor Health Funding Correction Act of 2024 which would make changes to the World Trade Center Health Program and is estimated to provide additional funding through 2033.

While the VCF provides financial compensation to those with 9/11-related illnesses, enrolling in the WTC Health Program does not register a 9/11 victim with the VCF. They are separate programs, and the WTC provides medical monitoring and treatment for responders and survivors. Therefore, it seems that survivors must go through two separate [programs](#) to receive proper treatment.

Brosi said the most recent victim was buried last Saturday, and was a person diagnosed with terminal cancer less than a year ago.

"Less than a year ago he was on full duty riding on a fire truck and within a 12-month period he was buried," Brosi said. "A young person: early 50s, active, healthy, vibrant... and in less than 12 months was taken. That's the part you won't see in a statistic."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said that an estimated [400,000](#) people were exposed to toxic contaminants as well as risk of physical injury in the days, weeks and months following the attacks.

On the [morning](#) of September 11, 2001, four planes flying over the eastern US were seized simultaneously by a group of terrorists affiliated with al-Qaeda.

They used the planes as giant missiles and targeted the Twin Towers (at 8:46 Eastern Time and 9:03), the Pentagon, and perhaps the Capitol Building in Washington, DC - however, the passengers of the fourth plane fought back and the jet made a deadly crash in a field in Pennsylvania at 10:03. During the attacks, approximately 3,000 people lost their lives with most of them being in New York. The youngest victim was just two years old.

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Will 'Insane' Biden Provoke World War III Before November Election?

The last several years have brought the United States closer to conflict with a nuclear-armed power than any time since the 1960s, one former CIA analyst claimed.

Lasting from the end of World War II until the early 1990s, the Cold War saw the United States and the USSR locked in a global competition for power and influence. Although the two superpowers never went to war directly, the 45-year period was marked by two proxy conflicts in Vietnam and Korea and a constant fear that a third World War was not far away.

Tensions were heightened by the fact that both the United States and the Soviet Union possessed nuclear weapons, dramatically raising the stakes of global conflict.

Both countries nearly saw their worst fears realized during the Cuban Missile Crisis, when it appeared the US and USSR were unwilling to back down over the issue of nuclear missiles being placed just miles from each country's border in Cuba and Turkey. The incident led to the establishment of a special hotline for US and Soviet leaders to communicate directly, and caused US President John F. Kennedy to remark that tensions between nuclear powers [must never again rise to such a level](#).

For decades, Kennedy's maxim was dutifully observed as both countries worked to improve relations, finally culminating in the end of the Cold War.

The prospect for nuclear confrontation was avoided until recent years, claimed former CIA analyst Ray McGovern, when the United States rejected Russian overtures for a new European security architecture and stubbornly insisted Ukraine's coup regime would be granted entry into NATO. The analyst joined [Sputnik's The Critical Hour program Wednesday](#) to consider whether US President Joe Biden is willing to risk global conflict to reverse Kiev's flagging fortunes on the battlefield.

"They want to provoke Putin [into] doing something really drastic before the election, before the [presidential] election here on November 5th," suggested McGovern, a critic of neoconservative US foreign policy.

"They're losing in Kursk [region]," he noted, referring to Ukraine's stalled incursion into Russian territory. "What were they trying to do? They were trying to get the Russians to react in such a way as to bring the US in with both feet militarily."

"What's this business about [Ukraine] begging for longer range missiles?" McGovern continued. "Same objective."

Ukraine's Western sponsors have repeatedly escalated the country's conflict with Russia, gradually providing Kiev with more powerful weapons and granting it permission to strike within Russian territory. This has increasingly culminated in attacks on Russian civilians; perhaps most provocatively [a strike on a beach in the city of Sevastopol](#) that injured 124 people, including 27 children, and killed three people, including two children.

[Some 500 Russian civilians have been killed](#) by the Ukrainian regime in 2024 alone as the country continues to rely on the support of neo-Nazi formations such as the notorious Azov Battalion*. Kiev's provocative attacks seem tailor-made to produce a harsh response, but Russian President Vladimir Putin has so far sought to avoid any attack likely to draw the United States or Ukraine's European allies directly into the conflict.

"My fear is that [the United States] will try something really drastic like a false flag attack or maybe even a mini nuke," said McGovern, concerned that the US could fabricate an episode such as the Gulf of Tonkin incident that drew the country into the Vietnam War. "Let's see what happens the next couple of weeks. I think Putin is right. It's only the smart thing to see who wins on the 5th of November. Till then, I'm still holding my breath."

But McGovern warned that the consequences of the United States' strategy in Ukraine could fall not on the US itself, but on its European allies.

"It's really hard to know what Biden and [National Security Advisor Jake] Sullivan, who are running things, really think," he claimed. "Some of my best friends and analysts think they're insane. And it's really, really hard to predict what they're going to do if they're insane."

"The Europeans are being told by the Russians, 'look, if Biden, Blinken and Sullivan opt for a tactical nuclear weapon, for God's sake, please, please remember we got them too. And where

will we use them? We'll use them in Europe,” McGovern said, summarizing Russia’s possible response.

“So I think when this is directed at the Europeans, saying, ‘look at what happened to your fellow country in Europe, Ukraine. You want the same thing to happen to you? So, please, rein these guys in.’”

Will ‘insane’ Biden provoke World War III before November election?

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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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US can Allow Ukraine Use British, French Missiles but Restrict Its Own Long-Range Weapons for Use Inside Russia- Reports

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Hollywood Film Producer Harvey Weinstein Faces New Charges - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Hollywood film producer and convicted sex offender Harvey Weinstein is facing new charges but the details of the indictment will not be unsealed until he is formally charged in court on September 18, the New York Times reported on Thursday.

Weinstein was not present in court on Thursday morning; jail records indicate he remained at Bellevue Hospital following emergency heart surgery, with the new sealed indictment pending his recovery for arraignment.

Earlier this week, Weinstein was rushed from Rikers Island prison to Bellevue Hospital in New York City to undergo an emergency heart surgery.

Weinstein is due in court this week in Manhattan, where prosecutors are working to secure a new indictment against him on sex crimes charges. He has recently appeared in court in a wheelchair and has asked to remain in custody at Riker's Island.

A New York jury found Weinstein guilty of assaulting two women and sentenced him to 23 years in prison. While the initial ruling was overturned over critical errors made by the trial judge, Weinstein is not likely to walk free, as he was also convicted by a Los Angeles court in 2022 of raping one woman and sentenced to 16 years in prison.

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US Army to Request More Funding for Drones, Electronic Warfare in New Budget - Wormuth

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The conflict in Ukraine has influenced the US Army's decision to ask Congress to increase funding for drones and electronic warfare in the new budget, which will be released this spring, US Army Secretary Christine Wormuth said on Thursday.

"A direct result of what we're seeing in Ukraine is causing us to adjust our budget that will come up next spring, you'll see a significant increase in investment in unmanned aerial systems [UAS], counter UAS, and electronic warfare capabilities as well," Wormuth said during a discussion hosted by the Stimson Center in Washington.

Wormuth noted that the United States is learning more from Ukrainians than they do from Americans.

In April, Wormuth said that the US military is working with private companies to invest in cheaper but effective systems to shoot down drones.

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Springfield Officials Say Have Not Found Any Record of Haitian Migrants Eating Pets

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The Clark County Sheriff's Office told Sputnik on Thursday that local authorities in Springfield, Ohio, have not found any record of Haitian migrants eating pets in the community.

"At this time we have not found any other record concerning Haitians harvesting geese. At this time, we have not found any record of Haitians eating pets," the sheriff's office said in a statement.

The Clark County Sheriff's Office shared audio of a call it received on August 26 from a resident in Springfield alleging that Haitians were harvesting geese, but noted that this is the only record authorities have on these claims.

A Springfield city official also said they are not aware of any credible reports proving these "rumors."

"In response to recent rumors alleging criminal activity by the immigrant population in our city, we wish to clarify that there have been no credible reports or specific claims of pets being harmed, injured or abused by individuals within the immigrant community," the city official said in a statement to Sputnik.

The city official added that there have been no verified instances of immigrants engaging in illegal activities such as squatting or littering in front of residents' homes.

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

According to Springfield City Manager Bryan Heck, the city of Springfield is facing a housing crisis after more than 15,000 Haitian migrants moved into the area over the last four years. Prior to this uptick in the city's population, the town had some 60,000 residents, Heck said.

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UPDATE- US Sanctions 16 Venezuelan Officials For Alleged Electoral Fraud – Treasury

(Updates information throughout the text)

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) – The US Treasury sanctioned on Thursday 16 Venezuelan officials affiliated with President Nicolas Maduro for alleged electoral fraud, according to a senior administration official.

"The Department of Treasury today will sanction 16 Maduro-affiliated officials, including leaders of the National Electoral Council, otherwise known as the CNE, and the Supreme Tribunal of Justice, the TSJ, who impeded a transparent electoral process, and the release of accurate election results," a senior administration official said during a press briefing.

"We are also taking actions against military intelligence and government officials who are responsible for intensifying repression through intimidation, indiscriminate detentions, and censorship," they added.

The official said it was “abundantly clear” that Edmundo González Urrutia won the most votes in Venezuela’s presidential election on July 28 but Maduro and his affiliates were seeking to “cling to power at all costs.”

The US will continue to calibrate its sanctions on Venezuelan individuals and entities, the official added, saying “there is still a significant time between today and January [when the next presidential term begins] for actors in Venezuela, including Nicolas Maduro, to begin to make better decisions than they have made to date.”

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G7 Has Not Yet Agreed on Terms For Providing Ukraine With \$50Bln From Russian Assets - IMF

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) – The G7 countries have not yet agreed on terms and parameters for providing Ukraine with \$50 billion in income from frozen Russian assets, International Monetary Fund (IMF) spokesperson Julie Kozack said on Thursday.

“The G7 authorities are in intensive discussions on the modalities and terms and conditions of fulfilling their pledge to provide \$50 billion in financial support to Ukraine via the extraordinary revenue acceleration,” Kozack told reporters.

It is important that this support is provided to Ukraine in a way that is consistent with restoring debt sustainability, which the G7 has pledged to do, she added.

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Mixed US Producer Prices Reinforce Bets For Moderate Fed Rate Cut

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - Mixed US producer prices suggesting stickier-than-preferred inflation are reinforcing bets for a moderate interest rate cut when policy-makers at the Federal Reserve sit next week to mull the first monetary easing in four years, analysts said Thursday.

The Producer Price Index (PPI), which measures average price changes seen by producers and manufacturers, grew by just 1.7% per year in August versus 2.2% in July. But Core PPI expanded by the same 2.4% per annum last month, as in July.

It was a similar story with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) data from a day ago that showed a marked slowdown in headline inflation versus stickier core CPI, which leaves out volatile food and energy prices. Headline CPI grew 2.5% during the year to August, versus 2.9% in July. Core CPI grew at the same 3.2% annual pace for both months.

“It’s a déjà vu,” Andreas Hauskrecht, clinical professor of business economics at Indiana University’s Kelley School of Business, said, referring to the PPI and CPI numbers, in comments carried by CNN. “It’s overwhelmingly positive, but the service side is a concern.”

Investing.com’s Fed Rate Monitor Tool assigned an 86% probability of the Fed agreeing to a 25 basis-point cut at its September 18 rate decision, versus a 14% chance for a 50-basis point

reduction.

The Fed 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 US inflation got out of control. Headline CPI hit 9.1% per annum in June 2022 — its highest in four decades — from the combined effects of government relief spending and breakdown in supply chains triggered by the coronavirus pandemic.

The last time the Fed reduced rates was in March 2020, right after the COVID-19 outbreak. It dropped 100 basis points then.

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IMF on Turkey's Bid for BRICS Membership: International Cooperation 'Should Be Welcomed'

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - Expanding international cooperation should be welcomed, International Monetary Fund (IMF) spokesperson Julie Kozack said on Thursday in comments on Turkey's bid for membership in the BRICS group of nations.

"Our view is that improved and expanding international cooperation and deepening trade and investment ties among groups of countries should be welcomed," Kozack said.

Kozack pointed out that the IMF encourages reducing economic fragmentation.

"The decision to join such an initiative is a sovereign decision of each member country," Kozack added.

Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov said last week that Turkey had officially applied for full membership in BRICS. Ushakov also said BRICS was unlikely to accept any new members during the Kazan summit in October.

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IMF Says Premature to Comment on Yudaeva Potentially Becoming Russia's New Director

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Thursday that it is premature to comment whether Ksenia Yudaeva may become Russia's new executive director at the IMF because the election process is still underway.

"Executive Directors are nominated by either their member countries or groups of countries, and they are elected to the IMF [Executive] Board by the member country of the group of countries that they would represent. This election and voting process is currently underway, so it would be premature for me to comment further," IMF spokesperson Julie Kozack said.

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IMF Board to Decide on Allocating \$1.1Bln to Ukraine in Coming Weeks - Spokesperson

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board will make a final decision on allocating \$1.1 billion to Ukraine in the coming weeks, IMF spokesperson Julie Kozack said on Thursday.

"We do expect the Board meeting to take place in the coming weeks," Kozack said.

The IMF announced on Tuesday that it has approved a staff-level agreement with Ukraine that would allow Kiev access to \$1.1 billion in funding.

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Magnitude 4.7 Earthquake Hits Near Malibu, California - US Geological Survey

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - A magnitude 4.7 earthquake hit 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) north of Malibu, California, the US Geological Survey (USGS) said on Thursday.

The earthquake occurred at a depth of 11.6 kilometers (7.2 miles), USGS said in a report on the event.

USGS also recorded a magnitude 2.8 aftershock near Malibu.

Malibu is located north of Los Angeles. California regularly experiences earthquakes, due to its location on the boundaries of the North American and Pacific tectonic plates, which formed the San Andreas Fault.

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IMF Making Trip to Russia Now Because Economic Situation More Settled - Spokesperson

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is making a trip to Russia for Article IV consultations in the coming weeks because the economic situation in the country is more settled now, IMF spokesperson Julie Kozack said on Thursday.

"In the case of Russia, since the invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the economic situation has been exceptionally unsettled, which has made it difficult to anchor Article IV consultations, especially thinking about the outlook and policy framework for both near and the medium term. Now, the economic situation is more settled, Article IV consultations with Russia are resuming in line with the obligations of both the fund and the member country," Kozack said.

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G7 countries have not yet agreed on terms and parameters for providing Ukraine with \$50 billion in income from frozen Russian assets - IMF

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imf board to make final decision on allocating \$1.1 billion to ukraine in coming weeks -
spokesperson

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

Biden to Host Quad Leaders Summit in Delaware on September 21 - White House

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden will host the fourth in-person Quad Leaders Summit in Wilmington, Delaware, on September 21, where he will welcome the leaders of Australia, India and Japan, the White House announced on Thursday.

"President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. will host the fourth in-person Quad Leaders Summit in Wilmington, Delaware, on Saturday, September 21. The President looks forward to welcoming Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of Australia, Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India and Prime Minister Kishida Fumio of Japan," the White House said in a statement.

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US House Passes Bill to Exclude Vehicles With China-Sourced Batteries From Tax Credit

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives on Thursday passed legislation to exclude electric vehicles with batteries made from China-sourced materials from eligibility for the clean vehicle tax credit.

House lawmakers passed the bill, dubbed the End Chinese Dominance of Electric Vehicles in America Act, in a vote of 217 in favor and 192 opposed.

The legislation amends the Internal Revenue Code to exclude vehicles with batteries which contain material sourced from prohibited foreign entities from the clean vehicle credit.

"We cannot allow foreign nations and entities of concern to receive American tax subsidies at the expense of our taxpayers while threatening American advanced manufacturing," House Majority Leader Steve Scalise said in a statement on the bill.

In 2022, the Inflation Reduction Act created tax subsidies for electric vehicles. The bill included measures to ensure subsidies did not benefit foreign entities of concern (FEOC).

However, the Biden administration imposed "lenient" FEOC rules that benefit China, Scalise said. The US Treasury Department created a loophole that allows wealthy foreign nationals with unofficial ties to China to benefit from the tax credit, as well as a loophole that defines battery components in a way that benefits China, Scalise added.

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UN Minimizes Exposure of Its Staff to Houthi-Controlled Areas in Yemen - Senior Official

UNITED NATIONS, September 12 (Sputnik) - The United Nations has limited its staff's exposure to the Houthi-controlled areas in Yemen to mitigate the risk of danger, UN Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Acting Emergency Relief Coordinator Joyce Msuya said on Thursday.

"In the meantime, Mr. President, we have taken steps to minimize the exposure of staff to risk in Houthi-controlled areas. To this end, the United Nations has recently undertaken a program prioritization exercise," Msuya said during a meeting of the UN Security Council on Yemen.

The UN has urged the new Houthi cabinet to protect humanitarian workers and facilitate humanitarian assistance in Yemen, Msuya added.

On June 10, the Houthis - formally known as the Ansar Allah movement - said they had detained an unspecified number of individuals for their links to the US Central Intelligence Agency and for allegedly carrying out intelligence and sabotage activities in Yemen.

In addition, the Houthis accused the detained individuals of using their positions at the US embassy to carry out subversive activities.

After the US embassy left the city of Sanaa, the individuals continued to carry out their subversive programs in Yemen under the cover of international organizations, the Houthis said.

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US Sanctions Beijing Research Institute of Automation for Machinery Industry - Treasury

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) – The United States imposed restrictions on the Beijing Research Institute of Automation for Machinery Industry as part of new sanctions against China, the US Department of the Treasury said on Thursday.

According to the department, the United States is targeting the Chinese entity for its role in the alleged proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

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biden to host quad leaders summit in Wilmington, Delaware on September 21 - white house

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.

Vance Says Harris 'Terrified' of Media Due to Restricted Engagement, Photographer Access

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - US vice presidential hopeful JD Vance on Thursday criticized Kamala Harris, the current holder of the job, for her lack of media engagement as reports surfaced about fewer White House photographers being allowed into her official jet.

The restricted opportunity for accredited photographers to follow Harris was expanded by

Republican Vance into a broader narrative about her being “terrified” of the media. “Why is Kamala Harris so afraid of (the) media and answering questions,” he asked during an appearance on the CNBC network of the Democratic Party’s nominee for president.

Vance also questioned how Americans could have faith in Harris to hold tough negotiations on their behalf with world leaders if she became president.

“Can we trust a person who's terrified of friendly American media to sit in a private room with Vladimir Putin or Xi Jinping and actually advocate for the American people's best interests,” he asked, referring, respectively, to the leaders of Russia and China.

Since being nominated three weeks ago as the Democratic Party’s candidate for the 2024 White House race, Harris has only sat for one media interview with CNN, appearing jointly with her running mate for vice president, Tim Walz.

This has raised questions about whether Harris will increase media access, providing opportunities for JD Vance and Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump to criticize her for avoiding unscripted speaking. Harris, along with President Joe Biden, typically use teleprompters when speaking at political rallies and other public events.

“I think she's incompetent,” Vance told CNBC. “That's why she won't go through the ... process.”

US media reported on Thursday that the four independent news photographers’ seats on Air Force 2 — the official jet of the vice president — have been reduced to one.

Jessica Koscielniak, who heads the White House News Photographers Association, was quoted as calling on Harris’ campaign to add a “chaser plane” to allow additional media representatives to follow the vice president.

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US Announces New Venezuela-Related Sanctions - Treasury

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The US government has imposed a new set of sanctions against Venezuela, the Treasury Department announced on Thursday.

The sanctions target 16 individuals, the Treasury Department said in a document.

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us announces new venezuela-related sanctions - treasury department

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Blinken Says Discussed With Sikorsky Ways to Reduce Poland’s Dependence on Russian Energy

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) – US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Thursday that he discussed with Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski ways to reduce

Warsaw's dependence on Russian energy.

"The foreign minister and I discussed ways that the US can truly support Poland's transition away from Russian energy by facilitating rational, safe, clean, and reliable nuclear energy," Blinken told reporters after the meeting with Sikorski in Warsaw.

In mid-August, Poland's energy giant Orlen had signed a year-long agreement with UK oil and gas giant BP to import six million tonnes of oil from the Norwegian oil fields in the North Sea.

Russia said multiple times that the West made a serious mistake by refusing to buy hydrocarbons from Russia; it will fall into a new, stronger dependence, due to higher prices. Moreover those who refuse to buy Russian oil and gas are still buying it more expensively through intermediaries, Moscow has said.

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Nearly Half Canadians Would Like Elections as NDP Breaks Deal With Liberals - Poll

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) – Nearly half of Canadians would like to see a federal election be called following the termination of a political agreement that bound the New Democratic Party (NDP) to the minority Liberal government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, a Leger poll revealed.

"Half of Canadians (47%) would want a federal election to be called given the current situation, while 34% would not, and 19% don't know. Conservative voters (80%) are more likely to want an election to be called," the poll released on Wednesday said.

In addition, the poll found that nearly two in five (38%) would want an election to be held this coming fall, whereas the same proportion would rather be called to vote as scheduled to take place on October 20, 2025.

Furthermore, the poll also found that 65% of Canadians are not confident in Trudeau's leadership in continuing to govern the country without NDP support. Two in five are not confident at all, it added.

In March 2022, the NDP and the Liberals signed a confidence-and-supply agreement in which the Neo-Democrats pledged to support the Liberal government on confidence votes in exchange for commitments on legislation put forward by their party. The deal was notably made to ensure the survival of a Liberal minority government following the 2021 elections.

Last week, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh announced the termination of the agreement binding the Neo-Democrats to the governing Liberals. Although not explicitly saying whether he would support a no-confidence motion against Trudeau, Singh acknowledged that a federal election was now more likely following the end of the deal.

On Wednesday, Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre announced the Tories would table a no-confidence motion against the Trudeau government at the earliest possible opportunity. In addition, Poilievre challenged Singh to unequivocally commit before Monday's by-elections to support the motion and trigger an election, or else he would be "selling out" Canadians once more.

In response, Singh said he would not listen or take advice from Poilievre who he accused of wanting to destroy the lives of Canadians. The leader further said he would not communicate

the party's decision ahead of time and would rather look at the votes on a case-by-case basis.

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Polaris Dawn Completes First-Ever Commercial Spacewalk – SpaceX

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) – The Polaris Dawn crew completed the first commercial spacewalk in history on Thursday, according to SpaceX.

"The Polaris Dawn spacewalk is now complete, marking the first time commercial astronauts have completed a spacewalk from a commercial spacecraft!" SpaceX posted on social media.

The Polaris Dawn crew launched from Florida on Tuesday for a five-day mission to low Earth orbit. Completing the first commercial spacewalk was one of its objectives.

The businessman Jared Isaacman and SpaceX engineer Sarah Gillis each conducted a short spacewalk, while the two other crew members remained inside the spacecraft.

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SpaceX Says Polaris Dawn Crew Completes First-Ever Spacewalk by Commercial Astronauts from Commercial Spacecraft

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Pentagon Commissions Study of Nuclear War Impacts on Agriculture in Russia - Notice

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The US Department of Defense is seeking to study the potential impacts of nuclear weapons on agriculture and the environment, including in Eastern Europe and Russia, according to a solicitation notice.

"The objective of this project is to build upon previous research efforts to develop and optimize AgriShock, a code suite for modeling the effects of nuclear weapons on agricultural systems," the notice said on Wednesday.

According to the notice, the scope of the AgriShock code suite is expected to be optimized by including former Eastern Block countries and going beyond the geographic borders of Eastern Europe and Western Russia.

The US Army intends to award the contract to Terra Analytics Inc. from the US state of Colorado for the research and development of programs that focus on modeling impacts on the environment and the impacts of nuclear weapons on farm systems, the notice added.

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Harris-Trump Debate Drew Over 67 Million Viewers - TV Ratings Service Nielsen

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The presidential debate between US Vice President Kamala Harris and former president Donald Trump that was hosted by ABC News drew an estimated audience of more than 67 million people, television ratings service Nielsen said.

Tuesday's viewership was higher than the 51.3 million that tuned in to watch the CNN-hosted June 27 debate between Republican Trump and incumbent President Joe Biden. Biden was the Democratic Party's presumptive nominee before he stepped aside to allow Harris to replace him.

Nielsen said in a statement Thursday that viewership count was taken from the total number of people who watched the debates from the 17 networks that aired them.

Aside from ABC, networks that aired Tuesday's debate included CNN, CNNe, CBS, FOX, NBC, Merit Street, Scripps News, Telemundo, Univision, BET, FOX News Channel, FOX Business, MSNBC, Newsmax, NewsNation and PBS.

Audience estimates included out-of-home viewing for all the reported networks except Merit Street, Newsmax, NewsNation, PBS and Scripps News, which do not include out-of-home contributions.

The presidential debate that drew the largest audience ever was in 2016 between Trump and his Democrat challenger then, former US secretary of state Hillary Clinton.

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Trump Losing Cool in Key Debate Boosted Harris - Experts

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's hot temper potentially gave an edge to Democratic rival Kamala Harris, analysts told Sputnik.

Trump and Harris sparred on Tuesday night in their first debate of the 2024 presidential election. The debate drew 67 million viewers, television ratings service Nielsen said, much higher than the 51.3 million that watched Trump and President Joe Biden in June.

Independent Institute Center on Peace and Liberty Director Ivan Eland believes Harris crushed Trump on debating style and mastery of policy issues. Harris' performance, Eland added, might be good enough to secure the support she needs.

"More than a quarter of voters said that they needed to know more about Harris. In this case, I think Harris may just pick up just enough votes to win," Eland said.

Covert Action Magazine Managing Editor and political commentator Jeremy Kuzmarov argued that Trump's failure to control his temper probably lost him the debate in the eyes of some key swing voters.

"In my assessment Harris probably benefited the most because Trump seemed angry at times and made certain ludicrous claims like that immigrants were eating dogs in Springfield Ohio," he said.

Trump also overplayed the illegal immigration theme, and falsely claimed Harris was a Marxist, Kuzmarov assessed.

US constitutional historian Dan Lazare said the contest was a draw but acknowledged Harris

scored some points by quickly firing back at Trump allegations.

"By the end, she was on fire, shaking her head at Trump's various pronouncements, shooting back with full force, and scoring more of her share of points," Lazare said.

Harris, for her part, did expose some of her own weaknesses, including a hawkish disposition, similar policies as Biden, and low energy presence, analysts said.

Lazare said Trump was successful when he hit Harris on her connection with Biden, inability to get things done, and "bland promises to fix things up while offering no evidence concerning her ability to turn the situation around."

Kuzmarov said Harris unapologetically revealed her super-hawk side, supporting all the current war policies of the Biden administration.

"Harris disturbingly displayed extremely hawkish views towards Russia and Ukraine while Trump was the sensible one warning about the danger of nuclear war and calling for a negotiated solution to end the bloodshed," Kuzmarov said.

Trump also raised awareness about the horrific loss of life in that conflict, which Harris showed callous disregard for, Kuzmarov pointed out.

Europe-based financial analyst and political commentator Alex Krainer found Harris's demeanor confident but inauthentic. The debate revealed both participants as highly limited and potentially alarming national leaders, Krainer advised.

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UPDATE - Harris-Trump Debate Drew Over 67 Million Viewers - TV Ratings Service Nielsen

(Updates audience number for record 2016 debate in final paragraph)

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Tuesday's viewership was higher than the 51.3 million that tuned in to watch the CNN-hosted June 29 debate between Republican Trump and incumbent President Joe Biden. Biden was the Democratic Party's presumptive nominee before he stepped aside to allow Harris to replace him.

Nielsen said in a statement Thursday that viewership count was taken from the total number of people who watched the debates from the 17 networks that aired them.

Aside from ABC, networks that aired Tuesday's debate included CNN, CNNe, CBS, FOX, NBC, Merit Street, Scripps News, Telemundo, Univision, BET, FOX News Channel, FOX Business, MSNBC, Newsmax, NewsNation and PBS.

Audience estimates included out-of-home viewing for all the reported networks except Merit Street, Newsmax, NewsNation, PBS and Scripps News, which do not include out-of-home contributions.

The presidential debate that drew the largest audience ever was in 2016 between Trump and his Democrat challenger then, former US secretary of state Hillary Clinton. A record 84 million people tuned in for that.

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State Dept. Notifies Congress of Plan to Give Egypt \$1.3Bln in Military Aid - Spokesperson

(Updates with details in paras 4-6)

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The Biden administration notified Congress that it approved \$1.3 billion in military assistance for Egypt, a State Department spokesperson said in a statement to Sputnik.

"Earlier today the Department of State notified Congress of its intention to provide Egypt with a total of \$1.3 billion in Foreign Military Financing assistance," the spokesperson said on Wednesday. "This decision is important to advancing regional peace and Egypt's specific and ongoing contributions to US national security priorities, particularly to finalize a ceasefire agreement for Gaza, bring the hostages home, surge humanitarian assistance for Palestinians in need, and help bring an enduring end to the Israel-Hamas conflict."

The State Department further said the US decision also reflects Egypt's role in promoting a ceasefire in Sudan.

The United States is not placing any conditions on \$980 million available to Egypt in security assistance, but \$225 million will require Egypt to meet certain human rights conditions, according to the State Department.

The spokesperson added that another \$95 million requires that Egypt "is making clear and consistent progress in releasing political prisoners, providing detainees with due process, and preventing the harassment and intimidation of American citizens."

The spokesperson noted that Secretary of State Antony Blinken has determined and reported to Congress that Egypt has fulfilled and made progress on certain human rights issues. As a result, he directed the State Department to release the \$1.3 billion in aid to Egypt.

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Trump Team Thanks Biden for Donning 'Trump 2024' Hat

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The War Room for Republican Presidential nominee Donald Trump is thanking US President Joe Biden after photos of the president wearing a Trump campaign hat circulated on social media.

"Thanks for the support Joe!" the War Room account posted on X.

White House Senior Deputy Press Secretary Andrew Bates commented on the photo, saying that the incident had occurred during Biden's visit to Shanksville Fire Station following his appearance at a 9/11 memorial service.

"As a gesture, he gave a hat to a Trump supporter who then said that in the same spirit, POTUS should put on his Trump cap. He briefly wore it," said Bates.

The President was in Shanksville, Pennsylvania for a service commemorating Flight 93, whose 40 passengers and crewmembers aboard the plane took collective action to stop hijackers from flying the plane into a federal building on the morning of September 11, 2001.

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The State Department further said the US decision also reflects Egypt's role in promoting a ceasefire in Sudan.

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Ex-CIA Officer Sentenced to 10 Years in Prison for Spying for China - Justice Dept.

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - A former officer of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Alexander Yuk Ching Ma, has been sentenced to ten years in prison for a role in a conspiracy to gather and deliver classified information to China, the US Justice Department said in a press release.

"Alexander Yuk Ching Ma, 71, of Honolulu, a former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officer, was sentenced today... [for] conspiring to gather and deliver national defense information to the People's Republic of China (PRC)," the release said on Wednesday. "Ma has been sentenced to 10 years in prison, followed by five years of supervised release."

US investigators have found that Ma began cooperating with China's Shanghai State Security Bureau (SSSB) in March 2001, more than ten years after leaving the CIA, where he served from 1982 to 1989, according to the release.

Ma confessed that he played a key role in facilitating the exchange of information between his blood relative, who also worked for the CIA from 1967 to 1983, and the SSSB to transfer classified national defense information collected by the relative throughout his years in service, the release said.

The convict was arrested in 2020 and as part of his plea deal agreed to cooperate with the US government for the rest of his life, the release added.

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US State Dept. Notifies Congress of Intention to Provide Egypt With \$1.3B in Foreign Military Financing - Spokesperson Confirms to Sputnik

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

US Tests Moscow's Patience With Talk of Allowing Kiev to Strike Deep Into Russia - Antonov

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The United States is testing Moscow's patience by its discussions on potentially allowing Ukraine to strike deep into Russia, Ambassador to the United States Anatoly Antonov told reporters.

Earlier on Wednesday, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said he discussed long-range strikes with Ukrainian officials and would bring the matter back to US President Joe Biden for further consideration.

"The United States is steadily driving itself deeper into the swamp of the Ukrainian conflict. Local politicians repeat the words 'Ukraine must win' like a mantra. They are ready to sacrifice the well-being of US citizens by transferring multibillion-dollar volumes of weapons and ammunition to the Kiev regime," Antonov said. "The curators from Washington have one demand - to increase the clash with Russian troops. We continue to be tested to the limit of tolerance for hostile steps, the purpose of which is the notorious strategic defeat of our country." Antonov stressed that such plans are not feasible, and neither the F-16s, nor the air defense

systems or HIMARS, nor other weapons will help.

"The administration persistently neglects Russia's interests. Nowadays there is more and more talk about the possibility of shelling Russian territory with long-range weapons," the Ambassador said. "Few politicians mention the possibility of a Third World War, to which the local authorities are paving the way."

Antonov went on to say that to justify hostile actions against Russia, Washington's strategists use provocative slogans about Moscow's plans to take over almost half the world.

"Outright nonsense is pouring out. At the same time, provocative pseudo-facts about some supplies from Iran, North Korea or even China are constantly being added to the fire of Russophobia," he added. "The warnings of some American military and political scientists about the impossibility of Zelenskyy to achieve his goals with the help of the notorious ATACMS or even longer-range systems are simply ignored. Just like in the old days of the Cold War, they claim that it's all Russian propaganda."

While it seems that in official Washington everyone understands perfectly well the situation on the battlefield, when every day Russian troops liberate more and more places in the DPR and LPR, the politicians are "extremely pleased" with the death of the Slavs on both sides.

"The simple task is openly proclaimed - to preserve the old system of international relations, which was dominated by the United States," he said. "It is clear that terrorist attacks by hundreds of drones on civilian infrastructure in the Moscow region will not be an isolated event. Kiev is being pushed to intensify attacks on ordinary Russians, our cities and villages."

No one is hiding anymore, even at the highest level in the White House, as intelligence data flows like a river from the United States to Kiev, he added.

Antonov concluded by saying that it is impossible to negotiate with terrorists - they must be destroyed.

"They must be hit even harder so that the provocative and essentially aimless attack on the Kursk region never happens again," he said. "No schemes or so-called 'peace initiatives' for a ceasefire in eastern Europe without taking into account Russia's national interests are simply impossible. Conferences will not help either, no matter how beautifully they are called. As during the Great Patriotic War, fascism must be eradicated, and the goals and objectives of the special military operation fully fulfilled. No one should have any doubt that this is exactly what will happen."

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US Lawmakers Ask Biden, Blinken to Launch Independent Probe Into Murder of Eygi - Letter

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal and Senator Patty Murray sent a letter to President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken requesting them to launch an independent probe into the circumstances of the killing of US national Aysenur Ezgi Eygi in the West Bank earlier this month.

"That is why we request an immediate, transparent, credible, and thorough independent US investigation, led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), into the killing of Ms. Eygi, which as Secretary Blinken said was 'unprovoked and unjustified,'" the letter said on Wednesday.

Eygi, a 26-year-old US human rights activist, died last Friday from wounds sustained in a clash with Israeli troops during demonstrations in the West Bank. The United Nations called for an investigation into Eygi's death. Her family called on Washington to conduct an independent investigation as well.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said on Tuesday that the death of US citizen Aysenur Ezgi Eygi during unrest in the West Bank last week was highly likely caused by unintentional gunfire from the Israeli forces.

The US State Department said that Washington expects Israel to reveal the results of its investigation into the killing of Eygi "as swiftly as possible."

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Hurricane Francine Makes Landfall in US Wednesday as Category 2 Storm - NHC

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - Hurricane Francine has made landfall in the United States as a category 2 storm, the National Hurricane Center said in an advisory.

"Francine has made landfall in southern Louisiana in the Parish of Terrebonne, about 30 miles south-southwest of Morgan City, as a Category 2 hurricane," the advisory said on Wednesday afternoon.

Maximum sustained winds are estimated to reach near 100 miles per hour, the advisory added.

The White House said earlier that President Joe Biden received a briefing from Homeland Security Advisor Liz Sherwood-Randall regarding Hurricane Francine.

The White House further said it is in touch with local and state officials that are expected to be impacted by the hurricane.

Biden has already approved the Governor of Louisiana's request for an emergency declaration, which unlocks federal aid for state recovery efforts.

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Ukraine Conflict Won't End Overnight Under Trump, But Harris Has No Plan - House Candidate

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - Although Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump would not be able to broker a deal to end the Ukraine conflict overnight if reelected, Democratic rival Kamala Harris has yet to even put forth a plan, congressional candidate Daniel Butierez told Sputnik.

Trump in his first and potentially only presidential debate with Harris this week vowed that he would be able to bring Russia and Ukraine to the negotiating table to immediately work out a peace agreement to resolve the current conflict.

"Trump aligns with me on these foreign wars. Trump absolutely meant what he said, he'd bring them to an end," said Butierez, a Republican candidate for US Congress in Arizona's 7th congressional district. "Unfortunately, I don't see this [Ukraine conflict] ending overnight."

At least Trump, Butierez added, has a strategy to end the war in Ukraine while Harris "didn't

even lay out a plan."

Butierez said Trump will be handcuffed because Biden's policies strengthened Russia and weakened America, suggesting it hurt the US and Ukraine negotiating positions.

The House candidate believes the US must stop buying oil, which ultimately benefits Russia, and "continues to fuel the war." Butierez said the best way to end the Ukraine conflict is by boosting US domestic oil drilling and production.

Moreover, Butierez pointed out that Trump was very clear about his plan to address the border crisis, but would have preferred if he left out mentioning unconfirmed reports of Haitian migrants allegedly eating pets in Springfield, Ohio, since it is something still being investigated.

Butierez said it's clear based on each candidate's record that Trump was very successful in securing the US southern border while the Biden-Harris administration's border policies were a "complete failure" over the last three and a half years.

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Wall Street Up 3rd Day in Row But Gains Limited by Mixed US Inflation Report

NEW YORK, September 11 (Sputnik) - Stocks on Wall Street rallied for a third straight day but gains were tempered by concerns that the Federal Reserve will likely agree to only a minimal interest rate cut next week, following a mixed report on US inflation.

The three main US stock indexes on Wall Street - the S&P 500, the Nasdaq Composite and the Dow Jones Industrial Average - finished Wednesday's session up between 0.3% and 2.1%.

The run-up came after the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI) grew 2.9% during the year to July. The August CPI number was exactly as forecast by economists on Wall Street and nearer to the Fed's annual inflation target of 2%.

But even with the tumble in headline inflation, core CPI - a measure that excludes volatile food and energy prices and more closely watched by Fed policymakers - grew at the same 3.2% annual pace seen in July.

Core CPI did not budge due to stronger inflation in shelter, airfares, auto insurance, education, apparel and 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 the increases seen elsewhere.

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

Mixed reception to the CPI data led economists on Wall Street to bet that the Fed will decide on only a 25 basis point cut at its September 18 rate decision, instead of the 50-basis point the market had been girding for.

In Wednesday's session, the S&P, an index which tracks the stocks of 500 high-performing US companies, closed up 1.1%.

The technology-heavy Nasdaq, which comprises pricey stocks such as Amazon, Apple, Netflix, and Google, finished the day up 2.2%.

The Dow, the broadest indicator for US equity markets and one that often reflects value, rose

0.3%.

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US House Passes Bill to Address Farmland Purchases by Foreign Adversaries

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives passed legislation to address farmland purchases by foreign adversaries, amid increasing Chinese ownership of agricultural land in the United States.

House lawmakers passed the bill, dubbed the Protecting American Agriculture from Foreign Adversaries Act, on Wednesday in a vote of 269 in favor and 149 opposed.

The legislation amends the Defense Production Act to require the US Secretary of Agriculture's inclusion on the Committee on Foreign Investment in the US (CFIUS) to review agricultural transactions made by adversaries.

The bill requires CFIUS to review and potentially block purchases of farmland by foreign adversaries that pose a national security risk.

"Over the past decade, Chinese ownership of US farmland has quintupled, increasing from 69,000 acres in 2011 to around 384,000 acres in 2021. Not only does this pose a growing risk to our food security, but Chinese corporations have also purchased or attempted to purchase land close to air force and military bases, threatening our national security," House Majority Leader Steve Scalise said in a statement on the bill.

However, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) said on Wednesday that the Biden administration opposes the legislation.

The bill is "unnecessary" since its main requirements are already operationally part of the CFIUS process and are consistent with text enacted in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2024, the OMB said.

From: Ethan Charles Holmes - ethan.holmes@sputniknews.com

Subject:

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Pentagon Says Awarded \$1.2Bln Contract for Medium Range Missiles to Ukraine, Partners

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The United States awarded a \$1.195 billion modification contract to Raytheon Co. (now a part of RTX Corporation) to increase the production of Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) missiles for a host of US partners, including Ukraine, Canada, Germany, and other countries, the US Department of Defense said in a press release.

"Raytheon Co., Tucson, Arizona, has been awarded a \$1,195,985,081 firm-fixed-price, incentive modification to a previously awarded contract for Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air

Missile (AMRAAM) Production Lot 38. This modification adds additional production of the AMRAAM missiles, AMRAAM telemetry system, initial and field spares, and other production engineering support hardware and activities," the release said on Wednesday.

Works are expected to be completed by December 31, 2028, in Tucson, Arizona, according to the release.

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US House Passes Bill to Require Senate Approval of International Health Agreements

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives passed legislation to require approval by a supermajority of the US Senate to ratify agreements from the World Health Assembly.

The WHA is made up of World Health Organization (WHO) member states. The group is negotiating a broad convention to define member states' responsibilities, preparedness and response in the event of a pandemic.

House lawmakers passed the bill, dubbed the No WHO Pandemic Preparedness Treaty Without Senate Approval Act, on Wednesday in a vote of 219 in favor and 199 opposed.

The legislation requires that any WHA agreement be treated as a treaty, which must be ratified by a supermajority of senators per the US Constitution.

"As the WHO continues to move forward in global negotiations surrounding their convention, it is vital the United States maintains its sovereignty, especially when it comes to the health and wellbeing of American citizens," House Majority Leader Steve Scalise said in a statement on the bill.

The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) said on Wednesday that it opposes the legislation.

The bill would "improperly purport to constrain" the US president's authority to make and implement international agreements, OMB said in a statement of administration policy.

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Boeing Could Be Hit With Strike by Friday if Two-Thirds of Its Union Vote to Stop Work

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) - Tens of thousands of Boeing employees could walk off its assembly line by Friday if two-thirds or more of unionized workers at the embattled planemaker vote to go ahead with a strike to protest wage conditions.

Some 30,000 employees who produce Boeing's 737 MAX, 767 and 777 jets in Portland, Oregon, and the Seattle area will decide on the vote. Many are upset that they will not receive the bigger paychecks and other work improvements they had sought.

But at least two-thirds of them must vote for the strike, otherwise the contract offered by Boeing management will have to be accepted.

Boeing lost more than \$1 billion in the financial quarter between April and June.

The company has been saddled with woes since a January 5 scare where the door on one of its 737 MAX 9 jets flown by Alaska Airlines blew out in mid-flight. None of the people, including 171 passengers, were hurt and the plane made an emergency landing in Portland, in the US state of Oregon.

Boeing's largest union, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, has been holding negotiations with management during the latest troubles for the company.

"We bargained in absolute good faith with the IAM team that represents you and your interests," Stephanie Pope, who heads Boeing commercial airplanes division, told her colleagues in a note made public on Tuesday. "Let me be clear: We did not hold back with an eye on a second vote."

Prior to this year, two 737 MAX 8 crashes in Indonesia and Ethiopia in October 2018 and March 2019 killed a combined 346 people, resulting in a temporary global grounding of the jets. Boeing announced in 2019 that it would compensate families and communities impacted by the fatal crashes with payouts totaling \$100 million.

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US Awards Nearly \$1.2B Contract For Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles to Ukraine and several other countries - pentagon

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SPUTNIK TOP STORIES OF THE DAY

WASHINGTON, September 12 (Sputnik) -

BLINKEN VISIT TO UKRAINE

* Blinken said that he discussed the issue of long-range weapons strikes into Russia with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Wednesday.

* The United States will continue to strengthen Ukraine's air defense capabilities in the coming weeks, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said.

* Blinken announced more than \$700 million in additional US aid for Ukraine to repair the country's energy grid and to provide humanitarian relief.

CONFLICT IN UKRAINE

* The Russian armed forces have thwarted an attempt by the Ukrainian armed forces to seize the Krym-2 jack-up drilling rig in the Black Sea with the use of 14 US-made Willard Sea Force boats last night, the Russian Defense Ministry said on Wednesday.

* It is possible that the decision to strike Russia with ATACMS missiles has already been made, and the West is trying to formalize it through media reports, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

* A possible call by US President Joe Biden to Russian President Vladimir Putin will not put an end to the Ukrainian conflict, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Wednesday.

* UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy announced the allocation of over 600 million pounds (\$780 million) to support Ukraine, Sky News reported

* The United Kingdom has decided to allow Kiev to use Storm Shadow missiles to attack Russian territory, the Guardian reported, citing government sources.

* Moscow has not received any appeals from German Chancellor Olaf Sholz either directly or through intermediaries, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

BRICS

* Moscow expects contacts to be held between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the sidelines of the upcoming BRICS summit in Kazan, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Wednesday.

* The leaders of several Arab countries have confirmed their intention to participate in the BRICS summit in Russia's Kazan, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov said.

* Russia respects the aspiration of every country, including Azerbaijan, to establish cooperation with BRICS and Moscow is ready to provide Baku with all possible assistance in this matter, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

SOYUZ MS-26 SPACECRAFT LAUNCH

* A Soyuz-2.1a rocket has been launched from the Baikonur space center and entered the orbit with the Soyuz MS-26 spacecraft carrying two Russians and an American to the International Space Station (ISS), a Sputnik correspondent reported.

* The Soyuz MS-26 spacecraft docked to the ISS, according to a broadcast by the Russian state space corporation Roscosmos.

SERBIA-RUSSIA COOPERATION

* An agreement between Russia and Serbia on gas supplies may be signed in early October, Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandar Vulin told Sputnik on Wednesday.

* Vulin told Sputnik that he will travel to Russia's Kazan for the BRICS summit scheduled for October.

US-RUSSIA SPACE RELATIONS

* Russia's state space agency Roscosmos and the US space agency NASA will agree and continue cross-flights of integrated crews to the International Space Station (ISS) after the spring of 2025, Roscosmos head Yuri Borisov said.

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NASA Says Working With Roscosmos on Continuing Joint Space Flights to ISS Beyond 2025

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - NASA is working to reach an agreement with Roscosmos to continue integrated space flights to the International Space Station (ISS) beyond 2025, a NASA spokesperson told Sputnik on Wednesday.

"We are working on a continuation of reciprocal flights of astronauts in Soyuz and cosmonauts on commercial crew vehicles," the NASA spokesperson said.

Earlier, Roscosmos chief Yuri Borisov told reporters he expects Roscosmos and NASA will be able to agree on the continuation of cross-flights of integrated crews to the ISS after 2025.

NASA and Roscosmos had previously committed to work together to send crews to the ISS until at least 2025.

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Oil Prices Rebound From Near 3-Year Low On Fear Of Hit To Output From Hurricane Francine

NEW YORK, September 11 (Sputnik) - Oil prices rebounded from a near three-year low on Wednesday amid signs of a hit to production from the latest storm headed for US shores.

Hurricane Francine was barreling toward Louisiana, with energy infrastructure in the US Gulf of Mexico in its path, said officials. The US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) and UK North Sea Brent crude benchmarks rallied about 2% each, responding to the risk posed by the storm.

WTI crude settled in New York trading up \$1.56, or 2.4% at \$67.31, after falling to \$65.27 on Tuesday.

Brent crude finished the New York session higher by \$1.42, or 2.05%, at \$70.61. In the prior day's trade, the global crude benchmark sank to \$68.68, a low not witnessed since December 2021.

After starting the year strongly, crude prices have tumbled in recent months on worries of oversupply and concerns about weakening demand for energy in the world's two biggest growth centers — the United States and China.

Even with Wednesday's rebound, WTI remains down almost 9% for September and 6% for the year, Brent shows a monthly loss of 11% and a yearly dip of 9%.

"The impact of a weakening global economy on energy demand has been a growing story over this year, with fears of a demand shortfall overshadowing fears of a supply shortfall," Colin Cieszynski, portfolio manager, and chief market strategist at SIA Wealth Management, said in comments carried by MarketWatch.

Crude prices tend to rebound in the face of storms that could make a direct hit on the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf is home to more than 48% of total US petroleum refining capacity. Oil production from the region, meanwhile, accounts for 14% of total US crude output.

The US agency, which oversees the energy industry's safety, indicated on Wednesday that the production of crude and natural gas would be impacted in the near term by Hurricane Francine. The Interior Department's Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement said 38.56% of oil

production and 48.77% of natural-gas production had been shuttered in the Gulf of Mexico.

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nasa, roscosmos working on continuation of reciprocal flights of astronauts and cosmonauts on commercial crew vehicles - spokesperson to sputnik

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Norway Buys Three More TPY-4 Radars to Boost Arctic Defense Coverage - Lockheed Martin

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Norway has purchased three additional advanced TPY-4 radar systems to expand its defense coverage of the Arctic regions, Lockheed Martin said in a press release on Wednesday.

"The Norwegian Defence Materiel Agency (NDMA) exercised a contract option to procure three additional TPY-4 radars from Lockheed Martin, bringing the new total to 11 of the ground-based multi-mission radars," the release said.

The TPY-4, which has been nicknamed "NATO's eyes in the north," also recently completed the Critical Design Review (CDR), confirming the radar design is meeting the program requirements, Lockheed Martin said.

"Lockheed Martin's TPY-4 radars are crucial components of Norway's defense and are the most suitable choice for supporting all-domain deterrence in the Nordic region," Chandra Marshall, Lockheed Vice President for Radar & Sensor Systems said in the release.

The TPY-4 radar system is a multi-mission sensor to enhance the Norwegian Air Force's capability to detect, track, and classify aerial threats, including low profile unmanned aerial system (UAS) detection, ballistic missile defense, and air traffic control, Lockheed Martin said.

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UNSC Unanimously Adopts Resolution Extending Sudan Sanctions for 1 Year - Correspondent

UNITED NATIONS, September 11 (Sputnik) - The UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution on extending the existing sanctions against Sudan for another year, a Sputnik correspondent reported on Wednesday.

The resolution is a technical rollover extending the Sudan sanctions measures for one more year. The initial resolution which renewed the sanctions measures was resolution 2676, adopted in March, 2023.

Russian Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations Dmitriy Polianskiy said after the vote that it is important for any external actions to assist Sudan in ways that are purely constructive in nature and they should only be undertaken in coordination with the country's authorities.

The resolution also recalls other documents that renewed the mandate of the Panel of Experts,

which is assisting the Sudan Sanctions Committee until March 2025 with its implementation.

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Харрис на дебатах не смогла оправдать провал погранполитики Байдена – экс-чиновник США

ВАШИНГТОН, 11 сен - РИА Новости. Кандидат в президенты от демократов Камала Харрис на дебатах не смогла оправдать провал пограничной политики ее однопартийца, президента США Джо Байдена, заявил РИА Новости бывший и.о. главы Иммиграционной и таможенной полиции США Рональд Витиелло.

Первые дебаты Харрис и ее конкурента-республиканца Дональда Трампа прошли накануне в Филадельфии. Оба кандидата остались довольны своим выступлением. Но если команда Харрис сразу после дебатов заявила о готовности участвовать во втором раунде, Трамп высказал сомнения в перспективах новой встречи.

"Бывший президент (Трамп – ред.) много говорил о проблеме иммиграции и о том, что (администрация Байдена – ред.) сделала, и она (Харрис - ред.) на самом деле не пыталась это оправдать, она не сказала: "Я сделаю лучше, у нас есть такой план", - заявил Витиелло.

Бывший чиновник вместе с тем отметил, что выступление Харрис не было провальным. Он также раскритиковал модерацию дебатов телеканалом ABC, который Трамп ранее неоднократно обвинял в предвзятом отношении к нему.

"Я думаю, что модерация была ужасной. Они перебивали его, но не перебивали ее. Его утверждения проверяли в режиме реального времени. Ее утверждения ни разу не проверили. На первый вопрос, заданный с порога, она не ответила. И поэтому я немного разочарован тем, как это было проведено с точки зрения формата", - заявил Витиелло.

Вопрос нелегальной миграции на южной границе США является одним из краеугольных камней предстоящих президентских выборов в ноябре. Поскольку количество незаконных пересечений на южной границе США регулярно обновляет рекордные значения в последние три года, администрация Байдена подвергается критике со стороны оппонентов, в то время как избиратели, согласно опросам, недовольны тем, как демократическая администрация США работает над решением кризиса на границе.

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Al-Qaeda, IS Still Pose Threat to US - Justice Dept. Official

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The al-Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS) terrorist groups (banned in Russia) continue to pose a threat to US security, although their capabilities have been degraded, Assistant Attorney General for National Security Matt Olson said in a podcast on the legacy of 9/11 on Wednesday.

"ISIS [IS] and al-Qaeda, while degraded, continue to pose a threat and continue to be

determined to carry out an attack against the United States," Olson said.

Olson said the US in particular is very concerned about the threat posed by IS-Khorasan (IS-K), an Islamic State splinter group that has found safe haven in Afghanistan, and the faction's capacity to move operatives into the United States.

The US, he added, also faces threats from state sponsors of terrorism and domestic terrorists. The biggest challenge the US faces is the threat posed by lone actors or very small cells that are difficult to counter, Olson said.

Olson said the number one concern every morning, when he meets with top Justice Department and FBI officials, is are there individuals inside the United States that threaten US national security, regardless of whether they are coming from the southern border, northern border, or any other country.

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US Top Priority is Blocking AI Theft by States, Terror Groups - Asst. Attorney-General

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The US Department of Justice and the FBI see their top priority as stopping the flow of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to potential adversary nations such as Russia, China, and Iran as well as preventing it from augmenting the threat posed by terrorist organizations like the Islamic State or al-Qaeda, Assistant Attorney General for the National Security Division Matthew Olson said on Wednesday.

"Our top priority is stopping the flow of Artificial Intelligence technologies to Russia, China, and Iran," Olson said on a Washington Post podcast.

AI technologies could dramatically expand the capabilities of both state actors and terrorist organizations to carry out a far wider range of attacks with enormously expanded lethality if it fell into their hands, Olson warned.

"AI is like an accelerant. It can change the capacity of our adversaries. Therefore we are focused on preventing the transfer of AI technologies to our enemies," he said.

However, the major US high-tech corporations developing AI are alert to the threat and are now cooperating closely with the Justice Department, the FBI, and other federal authorities on the issue, Olson added.

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Blinken Announces \$700Mln in New Aid to Ukraine, Including to Repair Energy Grid

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday announced more than \$700 million in additional US aid for Ukraine to help it repair its energy grid and to provide humanitarian relief.

"Today we're announcing \$325 million in new funding to help repair Ukraine's energy and electric grid," Blinken said during a press conference in Kiev. "I'm also announcing today \$290 million in new humanitarian support to help provide vital services like safe drinking, water, food,

shelter, medicine, to millions of people in Ukraine and around the region."

Blinken also announced \$102 million in additional funding for humanitarian de-mining to help remove landmines and unexploded ordinances in Ukraine.

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UN Remembers 9/11 Attacks That Hit New York, Will Never Forget Lives Lost - Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, September 11 (Sputnik) - The United Nations remembers the terrorist attacks on September 11 which hit New York City in 2001 and will never forget the nearly 3,000 people who were killed, UN Spokesman Stephane Dujarric said on Wednesday.

"On this day, we remember the 9/11 terrorist attacks that struck the city," Dujarric at a press briefing. "On this day the United Nations underscores its commitment to never forget the nearly 3,000 people from over 90 Different countries whose lives were taken on that day."

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, in a post on X earlier in the day, said his thoughts are with everyone who lost loved ones on 9/11 and all the people of New York City, a place he and many colleagues call home.

On September 11, 2001, two passenger planes hijacked by terrorists crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York, completely destroying them. Another plane flown by terrorists crashed into the west wing of the Defense Department building in Washington. A fourth passenger plane, also hijacked by terrorists, crashed near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. According to official figures, 2,749 people died in New York, 189 in Washington, and 44 in Pennsylvania.

In memory of the victims of the September 11 attacks, memorial events are held annually across the country. In New York, the ceremony began with a moment of silence at 8:46 a.m. ET - the time the first American Airlines plane hijacked by terrorists crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center. A bell also rang. After that, the ceremony of listing the names of the victims began: relatives approached the microphone and recited the names of the loved ones they had lost.

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SpaceX Says Polaris Dawn Astronauts May Do First Commercial Spacewalk Early Thursday

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - SpaceX announced on Wednesday that the four astronauts on its Polaris Dawn mission are expected to conduct the first commercial spacewalk early Thursday morning.

"The Spacewalk is targeted for September 12th at 2:23 AM ET. A backup opportunity is available on Friday, September 13th at the same time," SpaceX said in a statement via X.

On Tuesday, SpaceX said the Dragon spacecraft for the Polaris Dawn mission reached 1,400 kilometers above Earth, marking the farthest humans have traveled since the Apollo program over 50 years ago.

The Polaris Dawn mission launched early Tuesday morning from Florida atop a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket.

The crew will stay in orbit for five days. During that period, they plan to carry out scientific experiments and conduct a spacewalk, which will be the first time that space tourists have performed such a task.

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US Defense Official Dismisses Reports Blinken in Kiev to Approve Use of ATACMS in Russia

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - A US defense official told Sputnik on Wednesday that he would not put much faith in US Congressman Michael McCaul's claims that Secretary of State Antony Blinken is in Kiev to give Ukraine permission to use US-supplied long-range weapons for strikes deeper in Russian territory, adding that there has been no change to US policy on this matter.

On Tuesday, McCaul, who serves as the US House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman, reportedly told Axios that Blinken would notify Ukrainian officials that they could use US-supplied long-range weapons such as the long-range Army Tactical Missile Systems (ATACMS) to hit targets deeper inside Russia.

"I am not aware of any change in policy. I wouldn't put much faith in that report," the official said regarding the Axios report.

The United States currently does not permit Ukraine to use US-supplied long-range weapons for strikes on targets inside Russian territory. However, Bloomberg reported on Wednesday that the United States is pressing Kiev to detail its strategy before Washington lifts the restrictions.

Blinken during a press conference in Kiev on Wednesday said he discussed the issue with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Blinken also said he will discuss Ukraine's request with President Joe Biden when he returns to Washington.

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US Seeks Details From Ukraine on Plans to Strike Russian Territory - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The United States is seeking details from Ukraine about potential plans to strike deep into Russian territory with long-range weapons provided by the US and its allies, Bloomberg reported on Wednesday.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy traveled to Kiev to ask the Ukrainian government about its plans for the conflict into next year, the report said, citing officials familiar with the discussions.

Blinken and Lammy sought details about what Ukraine plans to target and why, the report said. The Biden administration is unlikely to make a decision on allowing Ukraine to use US-provided, long-range weapons to strike Russia before UN meetings at the end of the month, the report said.

Earlier on Wednesday, Blinken said he discussed long-range strikes with Ukrainian officials and would bring the matter back to US President Joe Biden for further consideration.

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Harris Did Better in Debate But Trump Gets Credit For Addressing Issues - Ex-DOJ Official

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Former US Justice Department prosecutor Ronald Sievert told Sputnik he believes Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris outperformed her Republican rival Donald Trump in the presidential debate this week but credited the former president for more adequately addressing key issues.

Harris and Trump held their first presidential debate on Tuesday, during which ABC News moderators pressed the candidates on key issues related to foreign policy, the economy, energy, crime, and immigration.

"Harris is not good at off-the-cuff spontaneous answers but she had two months to memorize her presentation and as I expected she prepared well," Sievert said. "Analyzing from a debate 'performance' perspective, she did well and better than President Trump who once again digressed too often."

However, Trump did better than Harris on addressing issues brought up during the debate, Sievert added.

Sievert mentioned that although Trump is not a particularly good debater, he is good at answering questions.

Moreover, Sievert pointed out that it is interesting a CNN poll taken after the debate said Harris "performed" better but that those surveyed felt Trump would do substantially better on the US economy, the US southern border and as commander-in-chief.

After Tuesday's debate, the Harris campaign proposed another presidential debate should take place in October.

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UN Premises Must Be Protected Amid War in Gaza - Spokesperson

UNITED NATIONS, September 11 (Sputnik) - UN premises cannot be misused by fighting groups and should be protected during the war in Gaza, Spokesman Stephane Dujarric said on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) detained a UN convoy in the northern Gaza Strip on suspicion of transporting wanted Palestinians.

"UN premises should never be targeted, nor should UN premises be used by any groups or any force from which to launch military activities," Dujarric said in the UN briefing. "UN premises need to be protected."

The UN premises also needs to be respected by all the parties, he added.

On October 7, 2023, Israel was subjected to an unprecedented rocket attack from the Gaza

Strip followed by Hamas incursion. Israel estimates that about 1,200 people were killed in the raid. The Israeli military launched Operation Iron Swords and imposed a complete blockade of the enclave.

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UN Summit of Future Participants Spent Great Efforts on Final Outcome - Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, September 11 (Sputnik) - The UN Summit of the Future holds its relevance because of the hard work which has been put into its final document, the UN Spokesman Stephane Dujarric said on Wednesday.

"What matters is the work that has been put in in these last months and especially these last weeks and days on the outcome document," Dujarric said in a press briefing.

The media reported that none of the heads of the countries of the permanent Security Council members will show up at the summit.

The Summit of the Future is aimed at enhancing cooperation and focusing on critical challenges under an idea of filling the gaps in global governance. The Summit of the Future Action Days will be held on 20 and 21 September at the UN Headquarters in New York.

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Blinken Says Reforms Crucial For Ukraine in Fighting Corruption

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Ukraine needs to do more work on reform to bolster the country's economic sectors and address corruption, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Wednesday during a trilateral meeting with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha and UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy in Kiev.

"More work needs to be done on reform. Ukraine needs to ensure investors and businesses they're treated fairly... [and] needs institutions that are independent, effective, and free from political interference. That's crucial for the national anti corruption bureau, for its regulatory bodies and the boards of state owned enterprises," said Blinken during the trilateral press conference.

The secretary also announced over \$700 million to provide humanitarian relief and to assist in repairing Ukraine's energy grid.

During their visit, Blinken heard appeals from Ukrainian officials for permission to use American and British long-range weapons to strike deep into Russian territory despite Moscow's warning to all parties that its red lines are not to be fooled with. Blinken said he will discuss the request with President Joe Biden when he returns to Washington.

Blinken and Lammy earlier met with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kiev to discuss continued support for Ukraine. Blinken will head to Poland on Thursday for talks with senior Polish officials.

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Singh Says Will Not Listen to Poilievre After Challenge to Support No Confidence Vote

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jagmeet Singh said on Wednesday that he would take up the challenge by his Tory counterpart Pierre Poilievre to support a no confidence vote against Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Earlier in the day, Poilievre said the Conservatives will table a no confidence motion against the Trudeau government at the earliest possible opportunity. In addition, Poilievre challenged Singh to unequivocally commit before Monday's by-elections to support the motion and trigger an election or else he would be "selling out" Canadians once more.

"I say directly to Pierre Poilievre: I'm not going to listen to you, someone who wants to hurt seniors by cutting their pensions, someone who wants to attack workers ... So, no. I'm not going to listen to your advice," Singh said during a press conference. "You want to destroy people's lives. I want to build a brighter future."

Further questioned on the no confidence motion against Trudeau, Singh said he would not communicate the party's decision ahead of time and would rather look at the votes on a case-by-case basis.

Last week, Singh announced the termination of the supply-and-confidence agreement binding the NDP to the governing Liberals. Although not explicitly saying whether he would support a no confidence motion against Trudeau, Singh acknowledged that a federal election was now more likely following the end of the deal.

In March 2022, the NDP and the Liberals signed a confidence-and-supply agreement in which the New Democrats pledged to support the Liberal government on confidence votes in exchange for commitments on legislation put forward by their party. The deal was notably made to ensure the survival of a Liberal minority government following the 2021 elections.

The next Canadian federal elections are scheduled to take place on or before October 20, 2025.

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New York Commemorates Victims of Sept. 11 Terrorist Attacks

NEW YORK, September 11 (Sputnik) – Many Americans are participating on Wednesday in mourning ceremonies commemorating the victims of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

In New York, dozens of relatives of those who were killed, survivors, and rescue operation participants gathered at the memorial on the site of the destroyed World Trade Center twin towers, a Sputnik correspondent reports from the scene.

On September 11, 2001, two passenger planes hijacked by terrorists crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York, completely destroying them. Another plane flown by terrorists crashed into the west wing of the Defense Department building in Washington. A fourth passenger plane, also hijacked by terrorists, crashed near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

According to official figures, 2,749 people died in New York, 189 in Washington, and 44 in Pennsylvania.

In memory of the victims of the September 11 attacks, memorial events are held annually across the country. In New York, the ceremony began with a moment of silence at 8:46 a.m. (3:46 p.m. Moscow time) — the time the first American Airlines plane hijacked by terrorists crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center. A bell also rang. After that, the ceremony of listing the names of the victims began: relatives approached the microphone and recited the names of the loved ones they had lost.

After that, the city was plunged into a minute of silence five more times: at 9:03 a.m., when the second hijacked plane crashed into the South Tower of the WTC, at 9:37 a.m., when the third plane rammed the wing of the Pentagon in Washington, at 9:59 a.m., when the first skyscraper collapsed while engulfed in flames, as well as at 10:03 a.m., when the fourth plane, which was supposed to crash into the White House or the Congress building, crashed in Pennsylvania before reaching its target, and at 10:28 a.m., when the second WTC tower collapsed.

President Joe Biden participated in this year's ceremony along with the two rivals in the presidential race — Donald Trump and Kamala Harris, who exchanged handshakes.

One witness, Patricia, shared that the tragic events took place not far from her home. "We live ten minutes away, over the Brooklyn Bridge, and you could see smoke coming through, and the stuff flying through the air," she told Sputnik. "Unfortunately, people forgot what happened there."

Alex, who worked in law enforcement in 2001, told Sputnik that he was one of the first who came to the scene and helped affected people. The stress he experienced then manifested itself years later when he was diagnosed with cancer.

"I got there after the first hit. Then, a second hit happened. This whole area became a war zone," he said.

The former policeman added that he was diagnosed with asthma in 2016, and got a double bypass two years later. "I got cancer in 2019-2020. Everything is because of this," he added.

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US Election Officials Warn USPS Shortcomings Could Impact Voter Access in 2024 - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) — In a letter to the Chief Executive Officer of the US Postal Service (USPS) Louis DeJoy, election officials expressed concerns over ongoing issues with the national mail system, AP News reported on Wednesday.

According to the report, election officials expressed concern in a letter stating that in the past year, including the recent primary season, mailed ballots postmarked on time were often delivered days late, and election mail was returned as undeliverable, potentially causing confusion for voters.

The report added that officials' repeated efforts to engage with USPS had been unsuccessful, indicating that the issues were widespread and reflected a broader lack of understanding and enforcement of USPS policies among its staff.

The US presidential election will be held on November 5.

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Blinken Says Discussed With Ukrainian Officials Long-Range Strikes Into Russia

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Wednesday that he discussed the issue of long-range weapons strikes into Russia with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

"We discussed long range fires, but a number of other things as well, and as I said at the outset, I'm going to take that discussion back to Washington to brief the president on what I heard," Blinken said during a press conference in Kiev.

Earlier this week, US House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Michael McCaul reportedly said that Blinken would notify Ukrainian officials that they could use US-supplied long-range weapons to hit targets inside Russia.

The Biden administration has said that its current policy does not permit Ukraine to use US-supplied, long-range weapons to hit targets in Russian territory.

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Blinken Announces \$700Mln in New Aid to Ukraine, Including to Repair Energy Grid

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday announced more than \$700 million in additional US aid for Ukraine to help it repair its energy grid and to provide humanitarian relief.

"Today we're announcing \$325 million in new funding to help repair Ukraine's energy and electric grid," Blinken said during a press conference in Kiev. "I'm also announcing today \$290 million in new humanitarian support to help provide vital services like safe drinking, water, food, shelter, medicine, to millions of people in Ukraine and around the region."

Blinken also announced \$102 million in additional funding for humanitarian de-mining to help remove landmines and unexploded ordinances in Ukraine.

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Trump's Media Stock Hits New Low After Debate With Harris

NEW YORK, September 11 (Sputnik) - Shares of the media company associated with former US president Donald Trump hit a new low Wednesday since they became publicly traded in March, the decline accelerating after a presidential debate that pundits said may have not given him the traction he desired for the 2024 White House race.

Trump Media & Technology Group Corp, which trades on the New York Stock Exchange under

the DJT symbol that is taken from the former president's initials, slumped to \$15.30 per share — its lowest since its debut on the exchange on March 26 at a high of \$79.38.

Michael Block, co-founder of the AgentSmyth investment advisory, said DJT's latest slump appeared to be related to the outcome of Tuesday night's presidential debate.

"Given its lack of earnings and other quantifiable metrics, DJT is not exactly a traditional growth or value play for investors," Michael Block, co-founder of the AgentSmyth investment advisory, said in comments carried by CNN. "DJT is a story stock and perhaps investors didn't like the story that President Trump was telling the world last night."

Republican Trump faced off on Tuesday night with his Democrat challenger, incumbent Vice President Kamala Harris, in a debate that political analysts said may not have done much to alter the stakes in the November 5 presidential election. Trump's strategists had been banking on the event to give his campaign a much-needed boost but analysts said preliminary results showed both candidates may have been evenly matched.

Since its public listing six months ago, DJT has swung in value, losing 70% ultimately from its highs. Trump's supporters buy the stock to try and enable his hope of recapturing the White House. Objective investors short-sell it due to their view that it is nothing more than a financially stricken publishing company trading at an unrealistic value.

In the second quarter ended June 30, Trump Media reported a 30% year-on-year drop in revenue to \$836,900. The net loss at DJT, whose businesses include Trump's Truth Social app, was \$16.4 million. The company blamed the dismal performance on unfavorable advertising revenue.

There is another reason for DJT trading at current lows: Trump's option to sell his own stock in the company, which he can exercise later this month. The former president has not given any indication that he would sell the 115 million shares he owns in DJT, which can net him about \$1.7 billion. But the existence of the option itself is weighing further on the company's valuation, market analysts say.

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Blinken Says US to Continue to Add to Ukraine Air Defense Systems in Coming Weeks

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The United States will continue to strengthen Ukraine's air defense capabilities in the coming weeks, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Wednesday.

"At the NATO Summit back in July, President Biden promised five strategic air defense systems and dozens of tactical air defense systems," Blinken said during a press conference in Kiev.

"We've delivered on several of those strategic systems. We're fully working to meet the commitment in the coming weeks, and we'll continue to add to Ukraine's air defense systems."

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Harris Did Not Defend Biden Failed Border Policy During Debate With Trump - Ex-US Official

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Democratic nominee Kamala Harris did not defend during the presidential debate with Republican nominee Donald Trump the Biden administration's failed border policy, former US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Acting Deputy Commissioner Ronald Vitiello told Sputnik on Wednesday.

"The former president [Trump] talked a lot about the immigration problem and what [the Biden administration] they did, and she didn't really defend it, she didn't say 'I'm going to do better, we have this plan,'" Vitiello said.

Illegal migration crossings on the US southern border have gone through three consecutive record-breaking years since President Joe Biden became president in January 2021, totaling some 8 million illegal encounters during that period, according to 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.

Moreover, Vitiello took issue with the ABC News hosts moderating the debate, suggesting they were biased against Trump.

"I think the moderation was terrible," Vitiello said. "They interrupted him, never interrupted her. Fact checked him in real time. Never fact checked her. The first question out of the gate, she didn't answer it."

However, Vitiello underscored that Harris did not perform poorly either.

US Congressman Paul Gosar said in a statement to Sputnik that the debate proved conclusively Harris will "deny, lie and imply anything" to distance herself from the failed Biden administration policies of the past three-and-a-half years.

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Blinken announces \$325MLn in new funding to help repair Ukraine's energy and electric grid

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Tories to Table Non-Confidence Vote on Trudeau at 'Earliest Possible Opportunity' - Leader

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Canadian Tories will table a non-confidence motion against the government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the "earliest possible opportunity," Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre said on Wednesday.

"I'm announcing that common sense Conservatives will put forward a non-confidence motion at the earliest possible opportunity," Poilievre said during a press conference.

Poilievre also challenged the leader of the New Democratic Party (NDP) Jagmeet Singh to unequivocally commit before Monday's by-elections to support the Conservatives' motion and trigger an election or else he would be "selling out" Canadians once more.

"Which will it be? It's put up or shut up time for the NDP," Poilievre said. "There will be a carbon

tax election."

Last week, Singh announced the termination of the supply-and-confidence agreement binding the NDP to the governing Liberals. Although not explicitly saying whether he would support a non-confidence motion against Trudeau, the New Democratic leader said the party would consider each vote on a case-by-case basis but acknowledged that a federal election was now more likely following the end of the deal.

Days before Singh's announcement, Poilievre had issued a letter directed at him in which he requested that he pull out from the agreement. In response, NDP House Leader Peter Julian said that leaving the deal was always on the table.

In March 2022, the NDP and the Liberals signed a confidence-and-supply agreement in which the New Democrats pledged to support the Liberal government on confidence votes in exchange for commitments on legislation put forward by their party. The deal was notably made to ensure the survival of a Liberal minority government following the 2021 elections.

The next Canadian federal elections are scheduled to take place on or before October 20, 2025.

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Having Russian Parish in Washington 'Very Important' for ROCOR - Bishop

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The only parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) in Washington, St. John the Baptist, plays a very important role in Orthodox church life in the US, Bishop Jerome (Shaw) told Sputnik on Wednesday.

"St. John the Baptist parish is one of the biggest parishes in our church. It is a very active parish, it is growing very fast, and it is very important to have it in Washington," Bishop Jerome said.

On September 11, St. John the Baptist parish, located in a calm Washington neighborhood just several miles from the White House, celebrates its 75th anniversary.

Bishop Jerome reminded that St. John's parish was founded in 1949 by St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco (Maximovich), who came to the US to ask the Senate to allow Russian emigres from the Philippines' Island of Tubabao to enter the country.

"The fact that it was founded by the saint is very important. We have only few churches in America that were established by saints," Jerome said, adding that one of them, St. Nicolas Cathedral in New York City, was founded by St. Patriarch Tikhon (Bellavin).

Despite the weekday, several dozens of parishioners came to the church early in the morning to pray on the parish's fest of Beheading of St. John. They venerated the wonderworking Hawaiian Iveron icon of the Mother of God, which is visiting Orthodox churches on the US Eastern coast.

Bishop Jerome pointed out that the parish in Washington is one of the few bilingual ROCOR parishes in the US, where liturgies are served in English and Church Slavonic languages every Sunday.

"It is a very important parish in our church by the nature of parish life," he said, adding that its rector, archpriest Victor Potapov, has a very rich experience in Russia and in the US.

The ROCOR jurisdiction has approximately 400 parishes, just over half of which are located in

the US.

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US Imposes Visa Restrictions on European Charter Flight Officials – State Department

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) – The US Department of State imposed visa restrictions on Wednesday on senior officials of a European charter flight company for facilitating irregular migration to the US through Nicaragua, according to a release.

“The United States took steps today to impose visa restrictions on senior officials of a European charter flight company for facilitating irregular migration to the United States through Nicaragua,” the release stated.

The release did not specify the company’s name.

The State Department has been regularly imposing visa restrictions on such officials amid a growing trend of charter flight companies targeting migrants seeking access to the US.

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US Sanctions 3 Persons, 5 Firms Over Oil, LPG Smuggling to Support Hezbollah - Treasury

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The United States has imposed sanctions on three persons, five firms and two vessels over alleged oil and liquefied petroleum gas smuggling to support Hezbollah, the Department of the Treasury announced in a release on Wednesday.

"Today, the US Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) is sanctioning three individuals, five companies and two vessels that are involved in smuggling oil and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) to generate revenue for Hezbollah," the release said.

The Treasury Department explained in the release that the network of Lebanese businessmen and firms is overseen by a senior leader of Hezbollah’s finance team and has facilitated dozens of LPG shipments to the Syrian government and channeled the profits to Hezbollah.

"Two prominent Hezbollah officials involved in these efforts include Muhammad Qasir (Qasir) and Muhammad Qasim al-Bazzal (al-Bazzal), who manage a channel for transporting LPG and other oil distillates on behalf of Hezbollah and directly receive payment for their sale," the release said. "The network designated today includes another senior Hezbollah finance team official, and two Lebanese businessmen providing a seemingly legitimate front to facilitate Hezbollah’s oil smuggling efforts."

The sanctioned persons include Muhammad Ibrahim Habib al-Sayyid, Ali Nayef Zgheib and Lebanese businessman Boutros Georges Obeid, the release said.

The Heavy Oil Distribution Company S.A.L. (HODICO), Heavy Industrial Fuels SAL HIF (HIF SAL), O.H.G. Holding SAL, HODICO Offshore, O.H.G. Holding SAL and European Lebanese International Trade S.A.R.L. (ELIT) have also been targeted by the sanctions, the release added.

The sanctioned vessels are the LPG tankers ALPHA GAS and MARINA, according to the release.

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US Lawmaker Says Harris in Debate Lied, Implied Anything to Distance From Biden Policies

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Vice President Kamala Harris proved in Tuesday night's presidential debate that she will lie and imply anything to distance herself from the Biden administration's policies, US Congressman Paul Gosar said in a statement to Sputnik on Wednesday.

"The debate proved conclusively that Kamala Harris will deny, lie, and imply anything to run from the failed Biden-Harris administration policies of the past three and a half years," Gosar said.

Harris made a string of disputable claims during her presidential debate with Republican nominee Donald Trump on Tuesday night, which was moderated by ABC News.

Harris started by claiming Trump would implement the controversial conservative agenda known as Project 2025 if elected. However, Trump has repeatedly distanced himself from Project 2025 and emphasized that he's never looked into it.

Harris also avoided fully addressing the illegal immigration crisis on the US southern border. The Trump administration was able to achieve record-low illegal immigration numbers on the US southern border, whereas the Biden administration has gone through three consecutive years of illegal migration on the US-Mexico border because of lax immigration policies.

National Border Patrol Council Vice President Art del Cueto told Sputnik that Harris seemed to stress the importance of defending the sovereignty and territory of other countries like Ukraine while failing to apply those same standards when it comes to securing the US southern border.

Moreover, Harris claimed during the debate that Trump would be weak on matters related to foreign policy and US national security, but the former US president has a better record of maintaining peace around the world compared to the Biden administration.

No major conflicts broke out around the world under the Trump administration. Trump immediately defused several potential major conflicts in the Middle East, including between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. The Trump administration also brokered peace agreements between Israel and Arab nations known as the Abraham Accords.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration has dealt with a years-long conflict in Ukraine and a Gaza conflict that will mark a year in October.

Harris also mischaracterized Trump's previous remarks about telling Russia it could "do whatever the hell it wants" with Ukraine. However, Trump was recalling his efforts to get NATO members to meet their minimum defense spending obligations by threatening to withhold US support.

Trump recently said he could possibly consider a plan to provide Ukraine more security assistance if Russia refuses to participate in peace talks, but the Republican nominee has expressed confidence he can broker a negotiated settlement between Moscow and Kiev immediately.

Harris also claimed that “there is not one member of the United States military who is in active duty in a combat zone in any war zone around the world [for] the first time this century.” The reality is that US troops are deployed in hostile zones in Syria and Iraq, where they are constantly attacked by so-called Iran-backed militias. US troops have been killed in attacks in Jordan and Afghanistan under the Biden administration.

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State Dept. Says Doesn't Have Enough Resources to Capitalize on Opportunities in Africa

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) – The US State Department does not currently possess sufficient financial and personnel resources to capitalize on opportunities across the African continent, Under Secretary for Political Affairs John Bass said on Wednesday.

“The immediate answer is ‘no’. We do not have sufficient resources to capitalize on all of the opportunities we have across the continent and to get the balance right between the essential work we have to be doing to help respond and address the wide range of crises on the continent,” Bass told the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

The official made the remarks while addressing a question on whether the State Department had the resources to engage with African countries in pursuit of US foreign policy and national security interests at a time when Russia and China continue to expand their economic, military, and political influence throughout the continent.

A lack of resources further prevents the US from taking advantage of proactive opportunities to deepen ties, generate new trade and investments, and help Africans build the capacity of their governments and the private sector to grow their economies and create better employment for the future, Bass added.

The Under Secretary noted that when he spoke of insufficient resources, he equally referred to the programmatic side of foreign assistance and the ways it can be used as well as the operational side, as the US is seeking to dig itself out of a 5-10 year period of understaffing in diplomatic missions overseas.

On Thursday, Chinese Ambassador to Russia Zhang Hanhui said that Beijing was ready to cooperate with Moscow in Africa, something he considers very important. The diplomat highlighted that both countries cooperate on African issues within the framework of the United Nations and other international organizations, noting that the joint work would be further strengthened.

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Nominee for US Envoy to Bahrain Hallet Says Will Protect US Interests From Russia, China

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - Stephanie Hallett, a nominee to become the US ambassador to Bahrain, said on Wednesday that she intends to work to protect US interests from the alleged negative impact of China and Russia.

"If confirmed, I will work to ensure that Bahrain's relations with Russia and China do not negatively impact US interests," Hallett told the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Hallett also pledged to support Bahrain's efforts to improve human rights and encourage an inclusive society and political dialogue while ensuring that the United States remains Bahrain's strategic partner of choice.

Earlier in September, Bahrain King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa officially invited Russian President Vladimir Putin to visit the country and is awaiting a response to the invitation.

In May, the Al Khalifa paid an official visit to Russia and held talks with Putin.

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US Getting 'Strangled to Death' by Millions of Regulations - Elon Musk

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - The United States is getting strangled to death by an increasing number of regulations, billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk said on Wednesday.

"America is being slowly strangled to death by an accumulation of millions of regulations," Musk said via social media platform X.

The US adds tens of thousands of new rules every year, Musk said. However, very few regulations are ever removed, Musk added.

Eventually, "everything" will become illegal, Musk said.

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Austin Says on 9/11 Damage to Pentagon Building Repaired But Not Damage to People's Hearts

WASHINGTON, September 11 (Sputnik) - US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said during the September 11 observance ceremony at the Pentagon Memorial that while the damage caused by the terrorist attack to the building in 2001 has been repaired, the damage to people's hearts has not.

"I'm honored to join you once more on this day of memory and resolve. And on behalf of the entire Department of Defense, let me offer my deepest condolences to the families, the friends and the loved ones of the 184 souls who were stolen from us 23 years ago today, here at the Pentagon and on Flight 77," Austin said. "We have repaired the damage to this building. But we know that we cannot repair the damage to your hearts."

Austin said the Defense Department personnel will always remember the men and women who lost their lives in the September 11 attacks and they do not need to come to the memorial to commemorate the tragic event.

"We don't just work near a memorial. We work in a memorial," Austin said. "Every day, we serve in the only surviving building struck by al-Qaeda on 9/11. And every day, we carry a powerful sense of purpose."

On September 11, 2001, the Al Qaeda terror group (banned in Russia) hijacked four airplanes, crashed two of them in the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York and another one targeted the Pentagon building near Washington. A fourth airplane crashed in the state of Pennsylvania. Almost 3,000 people were killed and more than 6,000 were injured in the attacks.