

10/9/24 Wednesday

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### Capitulation to Save Lives Only 'Victory' Left to Ukraine

On Saturday, US President Joe Biden indefinitely delayed his meeting with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky, citing the dual crisis of Hurricane Helene and Milton. However, the delay was also seen as a slight against Zelensky, who planned to press Biden to support his so-called victory plan.

Sports are often compared to war. NFL Films are full of flowery prose about the soldiers of the gridiron battling to the finish. And it is often said that there are no symbolic victories, no half-measures, no capitulation in sports. A win –and nothing else– is a win.

But life isn't a sport. There is no timer in real life, except for death, and that can hit zero at any moment. Every day it does for scores of people, some in incredibly gruesome and violent ways, more so in recent years. The elite play with our lives like a sport, but it is not a game. Reality is a shared continual experience that lasts as long as we do, all you can do is work to improve it while you are on the field.

Enter Volodymyr Zelensky, the man ostensibly able to make decisions in Ukraine but one seemingly without the ability to do anything. I imagine Zelensky was proud of himself when he morphed from a comedian with an unusual method of playing the piano, to the NATO-backed and installed "leader" of Ukraine. I imagine that the first night he slept in Marie Palace, he stayed up late thinking about all the things he would do with his newfound power.

I also presume he woke up sometime between then and now and found out that power was nothing but a dream. Maybe it was in 2019 when an Azov battalion fighter embarrassed Zelensky while he was allegedly attempting to get them to abide by the Minsk agreements. Or maybe he woke up when Ukraine had a peace treaty signed with Russia, only to have then-UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson come and tell him to scrub the whole thing and condemn his country to a bloody and fruitless fight with a much larger and more powerful country.

Or maybe it was this morning, when he found out the Ramstein conference, where he planned to ask Biden for more assistance and permission to strike deep inside Russia, had been delayed to an unspecified date. Zelensky's so-called "victory plan" will go unheard.

"There is no victory plan for Zelensky. Everybody understands that. His days are numbered," explained whistleblower and former Ukrainian diplomat Andrii Telizhenko on [Sputnik's The Final Countdown](#). "We're going to see how many days there are. [Is he] going to stay afloat until New Year's? Or [is he] going to stay afloat until November 5th – the [US] elections? Or until January [when the new term begins]? This is Zelensky's timetable now."

Zelensky is beset by enemies on all sides. Not just on the battlefield but internationally and domestically. The West is no friend to Zelensky. They assured him he could win with their help. They assured him that they'd stick by him "for as long as it takes." Anyone with a knowledge of US history could have told him that the US has a history of chewing up and spitting out its supposed allies, but Zelensky was a mere actor, what qualification did he have to doubt the leaders of the West?

Since they never blame themselves, the US will blame Zelensky for losing to Russia in a fight they never expected him to win and will look to replace him as Ukraine transitions to a rump state, but they'd prefer that he holds on until after the election in November.

"They need to sustain themselves. The deep state, the Biden administration, Kamala Harris, [the] Obamas, they need to show that they are still fueling this war, that they're fighting Russia to stay afloat until the elections. That is the main goal for them, and until then they will decide what's going to happen next," explained Telizhenko. "Kamala or Trump, they're going... to blame Europe and Zelensky and the Nazis in Ukraine. [Say] that they didn't do their job, even though they were given all the money that the world could give them, they didn't win."

Meanwhile, the head of Zelensky's office, Andrii Yermak keeps the former comedian isolated in a "bubble" who is controlling the narrative for the deep state.

There is also Azov, who never respected Zelensky to begin with and would be furious if he asked for peace. His political rivals are also salivating at Zelensky's perilous hold on power.

"The [Petro] Poroshenko people, the neo-Nazi radical groups, which Zelensky thinks he controls but they're controlled by the Ukrainian intel and law enforcement, together with the United States [Ukrainian People's Deputy of Ukraine] Yulia Tymoshenko, [Kiev Mayor Vitali] Klitschko, that crowd, they are going to eat him alive like spiders," Telizhenko said.

Lastly, the people of Ukraine themselves are increasingly turning on Zelensky. Those that wanted, or could be forced to fight in Ukraine have already been sent to the frontline. "The mayor of Dnepropetrovsk today spoke out that there's a problem, there's hardly any men in the city, so they have no one to defend the city," Telizhenko explained.

Over the summer, the anti-war underground in Ukraine started to grow, with multiple videos showing the vehicles used by mobilization officers being burned with gasoline.

Without the support of his people, his military, his government, or his nominal allies in the West, Zelensky has one option left: turning to Russian President Vladimir Putin and requesting capitulation.

It's not the end he wanted, but nearly a million Ukrainian men have been killed trying to secure his vision of victory. This is not a game. Zelensky should not worry himself with what he could have had, even though what he was offered by the Russians in Istanbul is far better than he can hope for now. Instead, he needs to look forward and make the only move he can to end the bloodshed.

"A win for Ukraine is saving more lives," argued Telizhenko. "As [many] lives as they can save, as [many] men they can save, women and children to rebuild Ukraine in the future, that's going to be a win for Ukraine."

The only way to do that is to stop sending aid requests to the West, and start sending apology letters east.

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He's Just Not That Into You

As Hurricane Milton is nearing landfall, victims of Hurricane Helene are still waiting for supplies and rescue. Meanwhile, FEMA says it doesn't have enough funding to last the hurricane season

and taxpayers in the affected areas are undoubtedly having buyer's remorse over all the funds Congress has allocated to Ukraine and Israel.

The issue, it seems, is the American people don't really do anything for the elite in this country. Sure, everyday people make up the tax base and quite literally are the economic engine that led to the 1%'s great fortunes, but that's expected. Ukraine and Israel are new and exciting. Big bombs and bigger contracts, that's the way to a president's heart.

Volodymyr Zelensky is willing to kidnap his own people and send them to die simply to hold off his defeat until after the US presidential elections. Benjamin Netanyahu is genociding a population so the West can have a forward operating base in the Middle East.

What has North Carolina done for America recently? They've been coasting on that "first in flight" tagline for far too long.

Last week, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre admitted that [only \\$4 million](#) had been sent directly to hurricane victims. That number has likely increased in the week since but it is still a pathetically paltry sum a full week after Hurricane Helene hit. Meanwhile, FEMA keeps touting its top-line number of \$286 million, which has primarily been given out to well-connected aid organizations that filled out the organization's "Vendor Profile Forum," enabling it to engage in "business with FEMA" ([their words](#)) if approved.

And even that number [pales in comparison](#) to what the government spent on previous major hurricanes, like Katrina and Andrew.

Maybe it is time for Americans to accept the facts. When it comes to the ruling elite and the Biden administration, they just aren't that into you.

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Live: Hurricane Milton Makes Landfall in Florida as Category 3 Storm

WASHINGTON (Sputnik) - Hurricane Milton has made landfall in central Florida as a category 3 storm, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) said in a statement.

"Extremely dangerous category 3 hurricane Milton makes landfall near Siesta Key Florida... life-threatening storm surge, extreme winds, and flash flooding occurring over the central Florida Peninsula," the NHC said on Wednesday night.

Max sustained winds at landfall are estimated at 120 miles per hour, the NHC added.

As of 9 pm ET, Milton was five miles north of Sarasota, the NHC said in an update.

New firstOld first

9 hours ago

Milton Downgraded to Still Powerful Category 2 Hurricane

The National Hurricane Center (NHC) downgraded Milton to a category 2 storm, but the news should not be celebrated.

Hurricane typically lose power rapidly once making landfall. However, after more than three hours, Milton is still sustaining winds close to 105 mph (165 km/h) according to the NHC.

The report predicts that Milton will travel across central Florida overnight before moving into the Atlantic ocean. There, it is expected to continue losing strength. It is currently located roughly 75 miles southwest of Orlando and is traveling at 16 mph (26 km/h).

9 hours ago

#### Tampa Ends Emergency Services - Fire Chief

The city of Tampa, Florida will temporarily halt emergency services as Milton continues its path of destruction, the city's fire chief told CNN during an on-air interview.

"We had to cease all services because it's too dangerous to put first responders out on the road." He noted that a lot of residents in the city are without power.

Earlier, Florida senator Rick Scott (R) told media outlets that "We can't take care of" residents who did not evacuate ahead of Milton's arrival.

10 hours ago

#### National Hurricane Center: Storm Surges up to 13ft Possible

The National Hurricane Center (NHC) now says that the water levels may rise up to 13 feet (3.9 meters) in some areas of Florida due to Hurricane Milton.

According to the latest update, Anna Maria Island to Boca Grande could reach 9 - 13 feet (2.7 - 3.9 meters).

Meanwhile, Boca Grande to Bonita Beach can expect 8 - 12 feet (2.4 - 3.6 meters). Tampa Bay, the report noted, can expect a surge of 3 - 5 feet (0.9 - 1.5 meters) the NHC said.

10 hours ago

#### Venice, Florida Resembles Its Namesake as Streets Flood With Water

The streets in parts of Venice Florida have been completely flooded with water and Milton has pushed the sea up to the shoreline, despite a relatively small amount of rain according to CNN.

Local media reported that water had risen more than 5.3 feet (1.6 meters) as of 9 pm and shows no sign of stopping.

Venice was named after the famous city in Italy, which was built on a group of 126 islands and utilizes canals instead of roads.

10 hours ago

#### FL Sen. Rick Scott: 'We Can't Take Care of' Residents Who Didn't Evacuate

Senator Rick Scott (R-FL) said in a television interview that the state's government cannot help residents who chose to stay in the path of Hurricane Milton.

"People that didn't evacuate that should've. We can't take care of them now," he said, citing the safety of the first responders.

11 hours ago

#### St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office Building Damaged by Hurricane Milton

11 hours ago

#### St. Lucie County Police Say 'Multiple Fatalities' Recorded After Hurricane Hits Region

St. Lucie County Sheriff Keith Pearson confirmed that several people were killed at the Spanish Lakes Country Club in southeastern Florida after hurricane Milton, a category 3 storm, hit the US state and caused multiple tornadoes, US media reported on Thursday.

Police officers are checking each house at the senior community off Spanish Lakes Boulevard near Fort Pierce to help those affected, and search and rescue operations are underway, the WPTV broadcaster reported, adding that it is unclear how many people have died.

"We have dozens of homes in St. Lucie County that have been damaged, some catastrophic damage," St. Lucie County spokesman Erick Gill was quoted as saying by the broadcaster.

Several tornadoes have spawned across the Treasure Coast and Palm Beach County as hurricane Milton approaches Florida, the report added.

Kevin Guthrie, the director of Florida's Division of Emergency Management, reportedly noted that about 125 homes were destroyed across the state, mostly mobile homes in senior communities.

On Monday, US President Joe Biden signed an executive order declaring a state of emergency in Florida and unlocking federal aid for local authorities to tackle the impact. Evacuations have been ordered for millions of local residents.

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Canada, Italy to Enhance Cooperation on Critical Minerals, Raw Materials – Ministry

WASHINGTON, October 10 (Sputnik) – The Canadian and Italian governments have agreed to strengthen their cooperation on critical minerals and raw materials, Natural Resources Canada (NRC) said on Thursday.

The intent was announced on the margins of the Group of Seven Ministerial Meeting on Industry and Technological Innovation.

"Canada and Italy recognize the importance of international partnerships to make critical minerals and critical raw materials supply chains more diversified, transparent, resilient, responsible, circular, resource efficient, and sustainable," NRC said in a statement.

Ottawa and Rome will strengthen cooperation through the promotion of trade and investment, exchanges of policies, and regulations.

The countries have committed to bolstering supply chains through international collaboration and multilateral engagement, research and innovation, as well as mapping and exploration, the statement said.

"Our Statement of Intent today demonstrates Canada and Italy's strong partnership, and we hope that it will bring many opportunities to continue building on our longstanding bilateral relationship," it added.

Both countries have committed to regular engagement on the issue through the Energy Dialogue, to be launched by Ottawa in the coming months, the statement said.

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#### At Least 4 People Dead in Florida After Hurricane Milton – Reports

WASHINGTON, October 10 (Sputnik) – At least four fatalities have been confirmed after Hurricane Milton made landfall in Florida, CBS News reported on Thursday, citing local officials.

On Wednesday night, Hurricane Milton made landfall on Florida's central west coast as a dangerous Category 3 storm.

All the four deaths were confirmed in St. Lucie County, where Milton caused 12 tornadoes in 20 minutes, the report said.

Florida had over 80,000 people in shelters overnight, Governor Ron DeSantis said during a briefing on Thursday morning.

At least 48 people have been rescued, the governor said.

As of Thursday morning, over 3.3 million households in Florida have no electricity, and this number is growing, according to the Poweroutage.us web portal. Almost 100,00 people are experiencing outages in North Carolina and Georgia, it added.

Over 2,000 flights have been canceled in the US, according to the FlightAware.com portal.

"Total cancellations within, into, or out of the United States today: 2,224," the website said.

Almost 1,400 flights, or about 90%, were canceled in Orlando and Tampa, it added.

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#### Republican Party Likely to Control US Senate as Montana Flips – Poll

WASHINGTON, October 10 (Sputnik) – The Republican Party is likely to gain control of the US Senate in the November election, as a seat in the state of Montana is poised to flip red, according to a poll released on Thursday by The New York Times and Siena College.

Democratic Senator Jon Tester of Montana is trailing his Republican challenger Tim Sheehy by eight points, according to the poll.

Republicans are also leading in key Senate races in Texas and Florida. In Texas, Ted Cruz is leading Colin Allred by four points, and in Florida, Rick Scott is leading Debbie Mucarsel-Powell by nine points.

While the Democrats currently hold a 51-seat majority in the Senate, they are already set to lose a seat to Republicans with the retirement of West Virginia Senator Joe Manchin and cannot afford to lose more.

The best realistic scenario for the Democratic Party is to tie 50-50 with the Republican Party in the Senate general election. Then, if Kamala Harris wins the presidency, her vice presidential running mate Tim Walz to be the tiebreaker in the Senate.

The poll surveyed 617 voters in Texas from Sept. 29 to Oct. 4, 656 voters in Montana from Oct. 5 to Oct. 8, and 622 voters in Florida from Sept. 29 to Oct. 6.

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#### Trump Declines Fox News Debate Proposal, Says 'Nothing to Debate' With Harris

WASHINGTON, October 10 (Sputnik) - Former President Donald Trump in a statement rejected Fox News' proposal to host a presidential debate in late October, claiming that there's nothing to debate after he won the last two against then-Democratic nominee Joe Biden and current Democratic candidate Kamala Harris.

"I WON THE LAST TWO DEBATES... IT IS VERY LATE IN THE PROCESS, VOTING HAS ALREADY BEGUN - THERE WILL BE NO REMATCH! BESIDES, KAMALA STATED CLEARLY, YESTERDAY, THAT SHE WOULD NOT DO ANYTHING DIFFERENT THAN JOE BIDEN, SO THERE IS NOTHING TO DEBATE," Trump said via Truth Social on Wednesday.

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#### US Charges 18 People, Entities for Cryptocurrency Fraud, Manipulation - Justice Dept.

WASHINGTON, October 10 (Sputnik) - The United States has charged around 18 individuals and entities including three Russian nationals on allegations of extensive fraud and market manipulation in the cryptocurrency sector, the Justice Department said in a statement.

"Eighteen individuals and entities have been charged for widespread fraud and manipulation in

the cryptocurrency markets," the statement said on Wednesday.

Aleksei Andriunin, Fedor Kedrov, Qawi Jalili of Russia, leaders of Gotbit, were among those indicted, the release added. Andriunin was arrested on October 8 in Portugal and awaits extradition, the release said.

"Gotbit, Kedrov and Jalili are each charged with wire fraud and conspiracy to commit market manipulation and wire fraud. Andriunin is also charged in a separate criminal complaint with wire fraud, conspiracy to commit market manipulation and wire fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering," the release said.

Three so-called market makers, ZM Quant, CLS Global and MyTrade, were charged with allegedly wash trading on behalf of NexFundAI.

According to the statement, the companies and their leaders allegedly made false claims about their cryptocurrency, engaged in wash trades to inflate their value, and sold them at artificially high prices in a "pump and dump" scheme.

Over \$25 million in cryptocurrency was seized overall, and several trading bots, which conducted millions of dollars in wash trades across about 60 cryptocurrencies, were deactivated, the statement added.

In an attachment detailing the indictment, the Justice Department specifically named four entities as among those charged: ZM Quant, CLS Global, MyTrade, and Gotbit.

The attachment also referenced a total of 15 individuals as among those charged including seven from the four entities: Kedrov, Jalili, and Andriunin (Gotbit); Riqui Liu, Baijun Ou (ZM Quant); Andrey Zhorzhes (CLS); and Liu Zhou (MyTrade).

In addition, Manpreet Kohli, Haroon Mohsini, Nam Tran, Max Hernandez, Russell Armand, and Vy Pham of Saitama; VZZN's Michael Thompson; and Lillian Finance's Bradley Beatty were also charged, according to the document.

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Biden Says Ridiculous, Stupid to Claim US Government Can Control Weather

WASHINGTON, October 10 (Sputnik) - US Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene's claim that the federal government can control the weather is ridiculous and stupid, US President Joe Biden said during remarks on Hurricane Milton.

"Marjorie Taylor Greene, the congresswoman from Georgia, is now saying the federal government is literally controlling the weather," Biden said on Wednesday. "It's beyond ridiculous. It's so stupid."

Hurricane Milton is set to make landfall on the western coast of Florida late Wednesday or early Thursday. The storm is expected to bring a life-threatening storm surge, damaging winds and flooding rains, according to the US National Hurricane Center.

Greene has repeatedly claimed in recent days that the US government is capable of modifying the weather.

"Yes they can control the weather," Greene said on Saturday via social media platform X.

"Anyone who says they don't, or makes fun of this, is lying to you."

Greene specifically cited a statement from former CIA Director John Brennan, who discussed

geoengineering in June 2016 remarks at the Council on Foreign Relations. Brennan said that potential geoengineering technologies such as stratospheric aerosol injections could help combat the warming effects of climate change.

Greene also pointed to more than 1,000 US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports on weather modification.

Nevertheless, Biden called on Greene and others to stop spreading "disinformation and outright lies" about the situation.

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Biden Says Will Support With Harris Recovery Efforts for Florida, Other Impacted US States

WASHINGTON, October 10 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden said that he and Vice President Kamala Harris will support rescue, recovery and rebuilding efforts for as long as it is needed after Hurricane Milton passes.

"My final message tonight is to the people of Florida and all the impacted states, we've got your back... Kamala and I will be there for as long as it takes to rescue, recover, and rebuild," Biden said on Wednesday evening.

Hurricane Milton, a Category 4 storm, is expected to hit the western coast of Florida late on Wednesday or early Thursday.

Florida is set to experience heavy rainfall, tornadoes and storm surges in advance of the hurricane's landfall, according to the US National Weather Service.

On Monday, Biden signed an executive order declaring a state of emergency in Florida and unlocking federal aid for local authorities to tackle the impact. Evacuations have been ordered for millions of local residents.

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Florida Family Braces For 'Destructive' Hurricane Milton, Caught Recovering From Helene

WASHINGTON, October 10 (Sputnik) - Florida resident Mark Lambie and his family have spent the last two weeks trying to save their home that was damaged by Hurricane Helene less than two weeks ago, but that work has come to a halt as they prepare for Hurricane Milton, a major storm weather experts are describing as catastrophic.

Although Milton has weakened slightly to a Category 3 hurricane as it approaches Florida's western coastline, it will still be a major hurricane with catastrophic impacts on the state, Governor Ron DeSantis has warned.

"We're just too tired," Lambie, of New Port Richey, Fla., told Sputnik on Wednesday. "For right now, we're okay, but I don't know what's gonna happen."

The US National Weather Service expects "destructive, potentially catastrophic storm surge, very heavy rainfall, and a few tornadoes" along Florida's west coast to begin this afternoon and

evening.

Lambie's home is located about 30 miles north of Tampa Bay, potentially on the path to take a "once-in-a-century" direct hit from Hurricane Milton later on Wednesday evening.

"We got caught trying to fix the house," Lambie said. "We had one day to prepare to get ready for this storm [Milton]. So, I mean, we did a lot of things we didn't do last time, obviously, but we're more concerned with wind this time than we are concerned with flooding."

Hurricane Milton, if it remains a category 3 storm, is projected to produce winds of up to 120 miles per hour.

"Everybody in our neighborhood and every single person along the coastline here has a 20-foot tall by 60-foot wide debris pile sitting in their front yards that are about to go airborne all over the place," Lambie said.

Lambie and his family are sheltering in an Airbnb home this week that is about five miles from their home but on higher ground.

"Who knows what this is gonna add to it," Lambie said thinking about the additional damage Milton may potentially cause for the family. "I wanted to be close enough to the house. I'm five miles away, and if all hell breaks loose, then roads close, I can walk there at least."

The Lambie family spent the last two weeks sorting through debris at their home in New Port Richey, trying to navigate their way through the aftermath of the disaster left by Hurricane Helene. They remained positive and had plans to rebuild their home even stronger to withstand other hurricanes.

"Then the second storm came...it was just too rushed," Lambie said.

Moreover, the Lambie family has received more assistance from their Church community, family, and friends, than they have from the state or federal government.

"My wife said she got a direct deposit from FEMA today for \$750. That's it. What's that gonna do? Our Airbnb for 30 days is \$2,700," Lambie said, adding that the money arrived two weeks after it was needed.

The Lambie family has home insurance, but there's no timeline for when that funding will become available.

"[The Insurance company] They said they'd get us an emergency payment quickly, and that was a week ago, we haven't heard from them since," Lambie said. "We haven't gotten a penny from anybody except for our GoFundMe. It's the only money we have."

The GoFundMe account created by Lambie's friends raised \$10,000 to help support his family's immediate needs.

The Church community deployed groups of people who helped the Lambie family repair damage to their home.

"They saved us. Without them, we wouldn't be anywhere near...Having 30 people there to use is, like, you can't pay for that," Lambie said. "And then time is precious after a flood. You need to hurry. You have about a day and a half until mold starts setting in on everything. The damage is like everything....anything in our house that was below 30 inches, or, you know, touched the 30-inch line was completely 100% destroyed."

On Monday, US President Joe Biden signed an executive order declaring a state of emergency in Florida and unlocking federal aid for local authorities to tackle the impact. Evacuations were ordered for millions of local residents.

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Hurricane Milton Downgraded to Category 3 Ahead of Landfall in Florida - Weather Service

WASHINGTON, October 10 (Sputnik) - Hurricane Milton has downgraded to a category 3 storm ahead of its landfall in Florida, the US National Weather Service (NWS) said in a statement.

"Major Hurricane Milton is now a Category 3 hurricane with maximum winds near 120 mph. Milton is expected to make landfall near or just south of the Tampa Bay region this evening, and could still be a major hurricane at landfall," the NWS said on Wednesday.

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SPUTNIK TOP STORIES OF THE DAY

WASHINGTON, October 10 (Sputnik) -

#### MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT

\* The United States does not want to see the same kind of Israeli military action in Lebanon as the one in Gaza amid a new round of escalation in the former, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said on Wednesday.

\* Israel has suffered the launch of 90 rockets from Lebanon to the north of the country, the Israel Defense Forces said.

\* The Hamas and Fatah movements are discussing the formation of a Palestinian national unity government at a meeting in Cairo, Basem Naim, a member of the political office of Hamas, told Sputnik.

\* Russia strongly condemns Israel's recent strike on Damascus and calls for respect for Syria's territorial integrity and sovereignty, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

#### FROZEN RUSSIAN ASSETS

\* The permanent representatives of the European Union countries preliminarily agreed on a mechanism for issuing a loan to Ukraine in the amount of \$38 billion with repayment from the profits Russia's frozen assets, the Hungarian Presidency of the European Council said on Wednesday.

#### NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL

\* Iranian authorities are seriously considering withdrawing from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Alaeddin Boroujerdi, a member of the national security and foreign policy commission of the country's parliament, told Sputnik on Wednesday.

\* Former US President Donald Trump said that the United States was close to reaching a denuclearization deal with Russia and China.

\* A group of 39 Iranian parliamentarians has asked the Iranian Supreme National Security Council to revise the country's defense doctrine, in particular to allow the creation of nuclear weapons because of the threat of an Israeli attack, Iranian state news agency ISNA reported, citing an Iranian official.

#### BIDEN-NETANYAHU TALKS

\* Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is holding a telephone conversation with US President Joe Biden, the Israeli Prime minister's office said on Wednesday.

\* Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris participated in a call with Netanyahu, the White House said.

\* Biden's 30-minute call with Netanyahu was direct and productive, White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said.

#### GLOBAL ENERGY MARKETS

\* The EU member countries have a desire to continue buying Russian gas through Ukraine after 2024 but there are no concrete actions and documents to that effect yet, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said on Wednesday.

\* Novak said that he instructed to work out mechanisms for closing possible gray schemes for exporting Russian diesel fuel inside the EUEA.

\* Swap operations between Russia and Azerbaijan for gas supplies to Europe through Ukraine are not being discussed and there are no such proposals, Novak said.

#### SITUATION IN RUSSIA'S KURSK REGION

\* Russian troops have taken control of the Pokrovskoe settlement in Russia's Kursk Region, the Russian Defense Ministry said on Wednesday.

\* Russia's army group North took control of the settlements of Novaya Sorochina and Pokrovskii in the Kursk region, the Russian Defense Ministry said.

\* The Russian forces have eliminated about 100 Ukrainian soldiers in the Kursk region over the past day, the Russian Defense Ministry said.

\* The United States presumes that Ukrainian military forces will be able to maintain their presence in the Kursk region for several months or even more, a senior US military official said.

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Trump Says Biden Might Hate Harris Equally to Him After 'Coup'

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - Former US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that current officeholder Joe Biden might hate Vice President Kamala Harris as much as him, after she replaced Biden as the Democratic Party's 2024 presidential nominee.

"He's angry at her and he hates her. The only question is – I think he hates her almost as much as he hates me," Trump said during a campaign rally in Pennsylvania.

In July, Biden suspended his 2024 presidential campaign and endorsed Harris as his replacement.

However, Trump characterized the event as the first “coup” in the history of the United States. On Tuesday, Harris described Biden’s decision to drop out of the race as courageous and patriotic.

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Biden in Call With Netanyahu Urges Diplomatic Arrangement Between Lebanon, Israel

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) – US President Joe Biden spoke to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday to discuss the situation in the Middle East and emphasized the need for a diplomatic arrangement between Israel and Lebanon to let civilians safely return to their homes, the White House said in a press release.

“President Biden spoke this morning with Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel,” the release said. “On Lebanon, the President emphasized the need for a diplomatic arrangement to safely return both Lebanese and Israeli civilians to their homes on both sides of the Blue Line.”

The two leaders also discussed Gaza and the urgent need to “renew diplomacy” to release the hostages held by Hamas, the release said.

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biden in phone call with netanyahu emphasized need for diplomatic arrangement to safely return lebanese, israeli civilians home - white house

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Ecuador’s Correa, Glas Ineligible for Entry in US Over Alleged Corruption – State Dept.

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) – Former Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa and his Vice President Jorge Glas have been barred from entering the United States over their participation in alleged “significant corruption,” the US State Department said on Thursday.

“The Department of State is designating Rafael Vicente Correa Delgado (“Correa”) and Jorge David Glas Espinel (“Glas”) as generally ineligible for entry into the United States due to their involvement in significant corruption during their time in public office,” the department said in a press statement.

Correa and Glas allegedly abused their positions as public officials by accepting bribes, including through political contribution, in exchange for granting favorable government contracts, the statement said.

Washington stands with Ecuadorians, its civil society, law enforcement, and investigative journalists committed to increasing “government transparency” and holding “corrupt public officials” accountable, the statement said.

“This designation also reaffirms our commitment to counter global corruption, including at the

highest levels of government,” it continued.

Correa served as president of Ecuador from 2007 to 2017. He also founded a socialist political movement, the PAIS Alliance, now known as MOVER.

Glas served five years in prison for bribery and criminal conspiracy before being released in late 2022. However, in December 2023, he was sentenced to six more years in prison in a corruption case involving Brazilian construction company Odebrecht, currently known as Novonor. On April 6, the Ecuadorian police stormed the Mexican embassy in Quito to arrest the former vice president, who had been granted asylum there after his conviction.

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#### Oil Averts Price Collapse As Israel Threat Against Iran Offsets Rising US Crude Supply

NEW YORK, October 8 (Sputnik) - Israel's threat to deliver a lethal strike against Iran prevented a potential collapse in crude prices Wednesday as investors stayed tuned to the security of oil supply in the Middle East versus a worsening demand situation in the United States.

US crude stockpiles rose sharply last week for a second week in a row, the first back-to-back large build of its kind since April, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported. But the bearish impact of the data was minimized by Israel's insistence that Iran will pay dearly for its missile attack on the Jewish state last week.

“Whoever attacks us will be hurt and will pay a price,” Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said in remarks that kept the Middle East on edge despite a phone call between US President Joe Biden and Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that had spawned hope for a de-escalation in the region.

Biden has said in recent days that Israel was eyeing Iran's oil infrastructure as among potential targets for a strike, but added that he was trying to talk Netanyahu's administration out of that.

Gallant maintained that regardless of the US posturing, the attack on Iran “will be deadly, precise and above all surprising ... they will not understand what happened and how it happened, they will see the results.”

Crude prices fell just minimally Wednesday after a near 5% plunge the prior day as investors weighed the Israeli threat versus the ballooning US crude supply situation as reported by the EIA.

“Traders ... remain on [the] sidelines, waiting ... and putting together contingency plans on the outcome rather than attempting to get in front of it,” said Scott Shelton, crude broker for ICAP in Durham, North Carolina.

US West Texas Intermediate crude settled New York trading at \$73.24 per barrel, down 33 cents or 0.5%.

On Tuesday, WTI fell 4.6%, signaling a reverse to the recent rally in crude that sent the US crude benchmark up 10.3% last week alone — its most since the final week of September 2022.

UK North Sea Brent finished the New York session at \$76.58, down 60 cents, or 0.8%.

Like WTI, Brent fell 4.6% on Tuesday. Last week, the global crude benchmark rose 10.3, the most since the final week of September 2022.

The EIA reported that crude inventories rose by 5.81 million barrels during the week ended October 4, after surging by 3.889 million the week prior. Industry analysts had expected a build of just 1.6 million for the latest week.

Inventories of fuel components gasoline and distillates, meanwhile, fell sharply, offsetting the trend set in crude.

Gasoline stockpiles tumbled by 6.304 million barrels versus expectations for a drop of just 1.0 million. In the prior week, gasoline balances fell by 1.119 million barrels.

Distillate balances dipped by 3.124 million barrels, beating forecasts for a decline of 1.754 million barrels. In the prior week, distillate inventories fell by 1.284 million barrels.

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White House Says Alleged Trump-Putin Phone Calls 'Concerning'

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said on Wednesday that it would be "concerning" if former US President Donald Trump has been holding periodic phone calls with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"It is concerning, especially when we know the former president was lobbying against more aid for Ukraine, [aid] to Ukraine to defend themselves against Russia's aggression. So if true, it is concerning," Jean-Pierre during a press briefing.

The spokesperson made the comment in response to a question regarding allegations about phone calls between Trump and Putin after the former US president left office.

However, Jean-Pierre said she could not confirm that any such phone calls took place.

US investigative journalist Bob Woodward claimed in his new book "War" that Trump has held a number of private conversations by telephone with Putin since 2021, according to CNN, which obtained an advance copy of the book.

Trump's presidential campaign denied the claims and criticized the descriptions in the book as inaccurate.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov rejected the claims, dismissing them as being "not true."

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US Charges 2 Russian Nationals for Allegedly Exporting Microelectronics to Russia - DOJ

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - The United States charged 2 Russian nationals for allegedly exporting sensitive microelectronics with military applications to Russia, the Justice Department said on Wednesday.

"Zhanna Soldatenkova and Ruslan Almetov, both Russian nationals, were indicted along with Arthur Petrov, a dual Russian and German national, for export control violations, smuggling, wire fraud, and money laundering in connection with their alleged participation in a scheme to procure US-sourced microelectronics subject to US export controls on behalf of a Russia-based

supplier of critical electronics components for manufacturers supplying weaponry and other equipment to the Russian military," the statement said.

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Over 3,000 Flights in US Canceled, Delayed Ahead of Hurricane Milton - FlightAware

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) – More than 3,000 flights in the United States have been canceled or delayed on Wednesday as Hurricane Milton approaches Florida's coast, according to the FlightAware.com portal.

"Total cancellations within, into, or out of the United States today: 1,904," the portal said.

Another 1,160 flights were delayed, it added.

Over 800 flights, or about 90%, were canceled at the Orlando International Airport. The Tampa International Airport registered almost 400 cancellations, while in Miami, 190 flights were canceled, according to the portal.

Hurricane Milton, a Category 4 storm, is expected to hit the western coast of Florida late Wednesday or early Thursday. Moreover, Florida is set to experience heavy rainfall, tornadoes and "catastrophic" storm surges in advance of the hurricane's landfall, according to the US National Weather Service.

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us charges 2 russian nationals for allegedly exporting sensitive microelectronics with military applications to russia - justice department

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Ukraine Planning for Battlefield Success in 2025 - Senior US Military Official

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - Ukraine's armed forces are planning how to achieve battlefield success in 2025, a senior US military official said on Wednesday.

"I'd say that, in my estimation, the Ukrainians are thinking forward to 2025 and how they set themselves up for battlefield success then," the official said.

Ukraine is working on how to ensure that additional brigades can activate as recruitment increases, the official said.

Ukraine is also focused on how they can "get through the winter," the official added.

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## US Presumes Ukraine to Maintain Presence in Kursk Region for Several Months – Pentagon

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) – The United States presumes that Ukrainian military forces will be able to maintain their presence in the Kursk region of Russia for several months or even more, a senior US military official said on Wednesday.

"My assessment is that the Ukrainians will be able to maintain their position in Kursk for some amount of time here to the future, I think several months, and potentially beyond," the official said during a press briefing.

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## Ukraine Has No Easy Path to 'Victory,' Russia Devotes Significant Resources - US Official

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - Ukraine has no easy path to victory as Russia continues to devote a significant amount of resources to its special military operation, a senior US defense official said on Wednesday.

"I am not, however, suggesting that Ukraine has an easy path to victory. Russia does continue to devote significant amounts of resources," the defense official said.

A senior US military official noted that Ukraine is expected to continue to see high losses in the conflict.

The defense official noted that the United States is closely monitoring how long Russia can continue to field additional forces on the battlefield without doing a major mobilization.

US President Joe Biden and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy were scheduled to meet in Germany on October 12 to follow up on the so-called victory plan after US and Ukrainian officials spent the last several weeks reviewing it, but the US president canceled his trip to stay in the United States to oversee the federal response to the category 4 Hurricane Milton.

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## RPT - No Change in US Policy on Not Allowing Ukrainian Long-Range Strikes Into Russia - Pentagon

(Repeats to include missing line in last para)

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - There has been no change in the US policy blocking Ukraine from launching long-range strikes into Russia with the use of US-supplied weapons, a senior Defense Department official said on Wednesday.

"We have not changed position on this," the official said during a press briefing.

The official explained that when making such a decision, the United States considers several factors, including its readiness and the risks of escalation.

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Canada Unveils \$11Mln in Humanitarian Aid for Lebanon - Foreign Ministry

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) – The Canadian government has announced C\$15 million (\$11 million) in new humanitarian assistance for Lebanon and will match C\$6 million in donations made to humanitarian organizations, Global Affairs Canada (GAC) said on Wednesday.

With its latest pledge, the Canadian government will have assisted Lebanon with more than C\$56 million since the beginning of the year.

"Today, the Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of International Development, accompanied by members of parliament and humanitarian partners, announced that Canada will provide an additional \$15 million in funding for humanitarian assistance to address urgent needs of civilians in Lebanon," GAC said in a news release.

The donation will assist trusted and experienced Canadian and International organizations to provide humanitarian assistance such as food, water and emergency healthcare, among others, the release said.

Canada will also allocate up to C\$6 million in donations made to the Canadian Red Cross' Lebanon Humanitarian Needs Appeal and the Humanitarian Coalition's Lebanon Emergency Appeal.

The pledge is sourced from a previously announced C\$10 million assistance funding, the release said. Every donation made by individuals to the aforementioned organizations from September 24 to November 3 will be matched to a combined maximum of C\$3 million for each appeal, it continued.

Ottawa will allocate the remaining C\$4 million equally between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme, the release said.

Since September 30, Israel has been conducting a ground operation against Hezbollah forces in southern Lebanon while continuing airstrikes. Despite losses, Hezbollah has been fighting Israeli troops on the ground and launching rockets across the border. Israel says its main objective is to create conditions for the return of 60,000 residents who fled shelling in the north.

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us has not changed its position on ukrainian long-range strikes into russia - senior defense official

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Biden's 30-Minute Call With Netanyahu 'Direct, Productive' - White House

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden's 30-minute call with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was direct and productive, White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said on Wednesday.

"It was 30 minutes long. It was direct, it was productive," Jean-Pierre during a press briefing. Jean-Pierre added that the White House is expected to release a readout of the conversation soon.

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Trump Will Hold Rally at Madison Square Garden on October 27 - New York State Senator

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - Former US President and 2024 Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump will hold a campaign rally at Madison Square Garden on October 27, New York State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal said on Wednesday.

"I've confirmed with [Madison Square Garden] that they signed an agreement with Trump to hold a rally on October 27 at 3pm at MSG, which is in my Senate district," Hoylman-Sigal said via social media platform X.

Allowing Trump to hold a rally at Madison Square Garden is a disastrous decision that will threaten public safety, Hoylman-Sigal said.

The state lawmaker compared Trump appearing at Madison Square Garden to Nazis rallying at the venue in 1939.

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Trump Speaks of Maximum Tariffs for China While Printing Bibles There - Reports

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - Former US president Donald Trump wants to put maximum tariffs on China if he returns to the White House but trade records show that thousands of copies of a bible he's selling were printed in that same country, the Associated Press (AP) reported on Wednesday.

A printing company in China's eastern city of Hangzhou shipped close to 120,000 copies of the "God Bless the USA" Bible to the United States between early February and late March, just before Trump began his rallies to recapture the White House in November elections - making China a target of his rhetoric.

Trump had announced in a video on March 26 that he'd partnered with country singer Lee Greenwood to market the bible, two days before 70,000 copies arrived from Hangzhou. He did not mention the Chinese printer.

Citing trade records, the report said the estimated value of the three shipments to the US was \$342,000, or less than \$3 per Bible. Buyers pay a minimum of \$59.99 per copy, putting return based on printing alone at around \$7 million. The actual amount received by Trump and his campaign is not known, as a copy hand-signed by him sells for \$1,000.

The bible deal highlights the contrast between Trump's harsh campaign rhetoric and his will to use China for his business when it suits, the report said.

When in office four years ago, the former president exempted bibles and other religious texts from tariffs imposed on billions of dollars of Chinese goods. He reiterated in September that he will put 100% tariffs on countries that are trying to shun the US dollar in their trade, including China. The BRICS group of nations, led by Brazil, Russia, India and China, have stepped up de-dollarization measures in recent years as they aim to use their own currencies to break the dollar's hegemony in international trade.

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Oil is the Only Interest of Western States in Libya -Russian UN Envoy

UNITED NATIONS, October 9 (Sputnik) - Oil is the only reason Western countries are concerned with what's happening in Libya, Russian Ambassador to the UN Vassily Nebenzia said on Wednesday.

"... we are surprised by the sharp reaction of some Western countries to the slightest disruption in the supply of Libyan hydrocarbons. It seems that Libyan oil is the only matter of concern for them," Nebenzia said during the UN Security Council meeting on Libya with his colleagues.

Nebenzia added that the conjectural interests of certain actors should not overshadow the urgent need for a political settlement in Libya.

In recent years, blockades of Libya's major oil fields have become more frequent as several armed groups declared themselves Libya's Petroleum Facilities Guard. The groups are demanding payment from the NOC for guarding oil facilities and have threatened to shut them down if the payment is refused or delayed.

Libya has been ruled by rival governments in the west and the east of the country since 2014. The United Nations-backed Government of National Unity is based in Tripoli, while the east is governed by the Libyan army-backed Government of National Stability. The country's south has been overrun by armed tribal groups.

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Biden Says Pressing Companies to Keep Gas, Flight Prices Stable Ahead of Hurricane Milton

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden said that he and Vice President Kamala Harris are pressing companies to keep the prices of gasoline, airfare and various goods stable as Hurricane Milton is expected to make landfall along Florida's west coast on Wednesday evening.

"At my direction, [FEMA] Administrator [Deanne] Criswell will be in the State Emergency Operations Center in Florida tonight, and Kamala and I are going to keep pressure on the companies so prices stay stable on gasoline, flights and goods people need," Biden said during a briefing on his administration's response preparations to Hurricane Milton.

Milton has weakened slightly to a Category 4 hurricane. Even if it weakens before landfall, it will be a major hurricane with catastrophic impacts on Florida, Governor Ron DeSantis has warned.

The US National Weather Service said it expects a destructive and potentially catastrophic storm surge, very heavy rainfall and a few tornadoes along Florida's west coast to begin this afternoon and evening.

Winds in the hurricane range and heavy rain are also expected in the wider Jacksonville area on Florida's East Coast.

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Harris Says Biden's Call With Netanyahu Classified But Important

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - US Vice President Kamala Harris on Wednesday said a call with President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu earlier today was important but classified.

"It was a classified call," Harris said when asked what Netanyahu's plans were regarding retaliation to Iran. "I don't have any announcements to make about what happened during that call... but it was an important call."

The White House said earlier in the day that Biden spoke with Netanyahu in a call joined by Harris.

Last week, Iran fired a massive barrage of missiles at Israel in response to the killings of Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah, Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh, and senior Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps commander Abbas Nilforoushan. The Israeli military said about 180 ballistic missiles were fired, most of which were intercepted.

Since October 1, Israel has been conducting a ground operation against Hezbollah forces in southern Lebanon, while continuing airstrikes. Despite losses, Hezbollah has been fighting Israeli troops on the ground and launching rockets across the border. Israel says its main objective is to create conditions for the return of 60,000 residents who fled shelling in the north.

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Lebanon Must Not Follow Gaza's Fate as Conflict With Israel Escalates – State Dept.

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) – The United States does not want to see the same kind of Israel's military action in Lebanon as in Gaza amid a new round of escalation in Lebanon, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said on Wednesday.

"There should be no kind of military action in Lebanon that looks anything like Gaza and leaves a result anything like Gaza," Miller said during a press briefing when asked to comment on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent remarks.

On Tuesday night, Netanyahu said in a video address to the Lebanese people that they "have an opportunity to save Lebanon before it falls into the abyss of a long war that will lead to destruction and suffering like in Gaza."

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Fox News Proposes Hosting Trump-Harris Debate Late October - Statement

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - Fox News announced on Wednesday that it has proposed hosting a presidential debate between Republican candidate Donald Trump and Democratic candidate Kamala Harris in late October.

Fox News said in a statement that it is proposing hosting the debate in the so-called battleground state of Pennsylvania on either October 24 or 27.

The debate would be moderated by Fox News anchors Bret Baier and Martha MacCallum, according to the statement.

The broadcaster underscored that the debate would present an opportunity for each candidate to make his or her closing arguments in the run up to Election Day on November 5.

Letters have been sent to each candidate's campaign, Fox News said, adding that this would be its final attempt to make it happen.

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Fox News Proposes Trump-Harris Debate in Pennsylvania on October 24 or 27

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US Senator Calls on University to Fire Professor Who Urged Execution of Anti-Harris Men

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - US Senator Roger Marshall said on Wednesday that the

University of Kansas should fire a professor who encouraged the execution of male voters who oppose US Vice President Kamala Harris in the 2024 presidential race.

A video that appears to have been taken during a lecture shows the professor calling for men who oppose Harris to be gathered and executed.

"Disturbing video from a University of Kansas professor. Anyone saying men who don't vote for Kamala Harris should be 'lined up and shot' is deranged and shouldn't be around students nor academia. I trust that the University of Kansas will take immediate action and fire this professor," Marshall said via social media platform X.

The professor also said in the video that the comment should be erased from the lecture recording because he did not want the university's deans to hear it.

The University of Kansas said in a statement that they are aware of the video and placed the professor on administrative leave.

The professor offers his sincerest apologies and deeply regrets the situation, the statement said.

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Monet Painting Stolen by Nazis Returned to Heirs of Original Owner - Statement

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - A painting by artist Claude Monet that was stolen from a Jewish couple by the Nazis has been returned to the heirs of the original owner, the Commission for Looted Art in Europe said on Wednesday.

In August 1940, the Nazi regime ordered the confiscation and sale of all the property of Adalbert (Bela) Parlagi and his wife Hilda, the Commission for Looted Art in Europe said in a statement.

Bela Parlagi attempted to find the confiscated art until his death in 1981, the statement said.

The Parlagi family approached the commission for help in 2014 and in 2021 the painting was discovered in New Orleans, the statement said. The owners voluntarily gave up the painting and their title to it, the statement said.

"Thanks to the efforts of the FBI Art Crime Team to whom the Commission turned for help in recovering the Monet, and to those of the Offices of the US Attorneys, the Monet was taken into FBI custody. In May 2024, the Eastern District Court of the US District Court of Louisiana ordered it to be returned to the heirs of Bela Parlagi, his two granddaughters Helen Lowe and Francoise Parlagi," the statement said.

The heirs said that their grandfather would be happy to learn that the painting was being returned to the family and expressed gratitude to all the people involved in the restitution effort.

There are six artworks confiscated from Parlagi's collection that remain missing, the statement said.

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## Trump Says US Neared Deal With Russia, China to Get Rid of Nuclear Weapons

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - Former US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that the United States was close to reaching a denuclearization deal with Russia and China.

"We were close to a deal for getting rid of nuclear weapons. It would be so good. We were talking about Russia, ourselves and China, and we would then bring everyone else into it," Trump said in an interview with the Flagrant podcast.

Nuclear weapons are too powerful, Trump added.

In 2020, then-President Trump stressed his desire to reach an arms control agreement with both Moscow and Beijing during a call with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

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## People on Florida East Coast Stock Up Ahead of Hurricane, Trying to Keep Calm - Resident

JACKSONVILLE, October 9 (Sputnik) - Residents of Nocatee, a community on the east coast of Florida, are stocking up on necessities and trying to calmly cope with the situation as Hurricane Milton is expected to make landfall along the state's west coast on Wednesday evening, local resident Anet Rowe told Sputnik.

Rowe lives 23 miles southeast of Jacksonville. The National Weather Service in Jacksonville on Wednesday morning advised residents to hunker down and remain sheltered by midday.

"I am just making the final purchases at the Publix supermarket in Nocatee. Usually there is plenty of parking, but today parking was not readily available. I am purchasing necessities to stock up for at least a week or so. People are trying to deal with the situation calmly and in an orderly fashion and hope for the best," Rowe said.

The weather is rainy and breezy, with winds of 16-17 miles per hour at present, she said.

The authorities in St. John's County, where Nocatee is located, have communicated with residents via email suggesting appropriate precautions, she said.

However, Rowe pointed out that her community has not been asked to evacuate and the Rowe family will not do so.

Rowe, who is a teacher, said St. John's County on Monday issued an order to close all public schools for the rest of the week. She added that the closures may be extended to the beginning of next week depending on how the situation develops.

The recent Hurricane Helene had only a very minor impact on the Jacksonville area and the hope here is that Milton will weaken as it advances inland, she said.

Milton has weakened slightly to a Category 4 hurricane. Even if it weakens before landfall, it will be a major hurricane with catastrophic impacts on Florida, Governor Ron DeSantis has warned.

The US National Weather Service expects "destructive, potentially catastrophic storm surge, very heavy rainfall, and a few tornadoes" along Florida's west coast to begin this afternoon and evening.

Winds in the hurricane range and heavy rain are also expected in the wider Jacksonville area.

Jacksonville is the largest city in the United States by area, spanning some 875 square miles,

and has slightly more than 1 million residents.

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Biden Speaks With Netanyahu, Harris Joins Call - White House

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) — US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris participated in a call with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday.

"President Biden spoke with Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel. Vice President Harris also joined the call," the White House said in the statement.

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Trump Says US, Russia, China Were Close to Deal to Get Rid Of Nuclear Weapons

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Florida 'Well-Oiled Machine' for Hurricane Response, Residents Not Abandoned - Commentator

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) - The US state of Florida's preparedness to respond to the impacts of Hurricane Milton is reassuring to residents, Josie Glabach, a Florida-based political commentator for Timcast News, told Sputnik on Wednesday.

"Florida is a well-oiled machine. No one handles hurricanes better than my Governor [Ron DeSantis], from organizing linemen and shelters, right through clean up," Glabach said in a statement. "No one feels abandoned."

Hurricane Milton, a Category 4 storm, is expected to hit the western coast of Florida late Wednesday or early Thursday. Moreover, Florida is set to experience heavy rainfall, tornadoes and "catastrophic" storm surges in advance of the hurricane's landfall, according to the US National Weather Service.

Glabach, a resident of central Florida who is better known by her online moniker The Redheaded Libertarian, said that she trusts the integrity of her house to protect her family.

Florida has a "wonderful, eclectic" community of people who share the values of perseverance and voluntarism, Glabach said, adding that the community works well in tandem with the state and local governments.

Following Hurricane Helene late last month, Florida was so organized that it was able to divert federal resources elsewhere and send its own State Guardsmen to North Carolina to help with recovery efforts there, Glabach said.

DeSantis said on Wednesday that Florida has more than 50,000 linemen and necessary equipment staged outside of the hurricane's path – the largest staging of power restoration workers in the state's history.

DeSantis urged Florida residents to execute their hurricane preparedness plans and heed

evacuation warnings. People may only need to travel tens of miles, not hundreds of miles, to avoid deadly storm surge, DeSantis added.

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Trump to Hold Rally at New York's Madison Square Garden Week Before Election – Reports

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) – Former US President Donald Trump is set to hold a rally at New York City's Madison Square Garden about a week before the election, Bloomberg reported on Wednesday, citing people in the know.

The event is scheduled to take place on October 27 in the middle of Manhattan in New York City, a Democratic stronghold, the report said.

The event promises to become a security and logistical challenge for law enforcement officials and to draw massive protests, according to the report.

The venue is located in Midtown Manhattan and has a capacity of about 20,000.

The US presidential election will take place on November 5. The Democratic Party will be represented by Vice President Kamala Harris, and the Republican Party by former President Donald Trump.

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CORRECTION - 'Catastrophic' Storms, Tornadoes to Hit Florida's West Coast Before Hurricane Milton - NWS

(Corrects headline to read 'Florida's west coast')

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) – A "potentially catastrophic" storm surge and tornadoes will batter Florida's west coast on Wednesday afternoon before Hurricane Milton makes a landfall in the evening, US National Weather Service (NWS) warned.

"Destructive, potentially catastrophic storm surge, very heavy rainfall, and a few tornadoes along the West Coast will begin this afternoon and evening," the NWS said.

Hurricane Milton in the morning weakened slightly to a strong Category 4 storm. Milton is expected to make landfall along the west coast of the Florida Peninsula late Wednesday.

The National Hurricane Center called on people to promptly follow evacuation and other instructions from local officials.

"Now is the time to rush to complete all preparations to protect life and property in accordance with your emergency plan. Ensure you are in a safe location before the onset of strong winds or possible flooding. Ensure you have multiple ways to receive weather warnings," it said in a statement.

Roman Vilfand, the scientific head of Russia's Hydrometcenter weather agency, told Sputnik on Wednesday that Hurricane Milton has the potential to become one of the most destructive tropical storms on record.

On Monday, US President Joe Biden signed an executive order declaring a state of emergency

in Florida and unlocking federal aid for local authorities to tackle the impact. Evacuations were ordered for millions of local residents.

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'Catastrophic' Storm Surge, Tornadoes to Hit US West Coast Before Hurricane Milton - NWS

WASHINGTON, October 9 (Sputnik) – A "potentially catastrophic" storm surge and tornadoes will batter Florida on Wednesday afternoon before Hurricane Milton makes a landfall in the evening, US National Weather Service (NWS) warned.

"Destructive, potentially catastrophic storm surge, very heavy rainfall, and a few tornadoes along the West Coast will begin this afternoon and evening," the NWS said.

Hurricane Milton in the morning weakened slightly to a strong Category 4 storm. Milton is expected to make landfall along the West Coast of the Florida Peninsula late Wednesday.

The National Hurricane Center called on people to promptly follow evacuation and other instructions from local officials.

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