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Videos: 'Life-Threatening' Hurricane Sally to Slam US Gulf Coast With 'Historic Flooding' by [Gaby Arancibia](#)

The US National Hurricane Center (NHC) announced Tuesday that Hurricane Sally is expected to bring "extreme life-threatening flash flooding" to the US Gulf Coast as it continues to move inland following its anticipated landfall.

Although the dangerous cyclone was [upgraded to a Category 2 storm](#) Monday afternoon by the NHC after it reached sustained wind speeds of 100 mph, Hurricane Sally has since been downgraded back to a Category 1 storm, with sustained 85-mph winds.

At present, the storm is about 60 miles from the mouth of the Mississippi River and is moving northwestward to the US' southern coast at a pace of 2 mph. The NHC predicts the cyclone will make landfall somewhere between Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, and Navarre, Florida, late Tuesday into Wednesday.

— SV News  (@SVNewsAlerts) [September 15, 2020](#)

The [NHC noted in its latest update](#), "Although little change in strength is forecast until landfall occurs, Sally is still expected to be a dangerous hurricane when it moves onshore along the north-central Gulf coast."

Forecasters have stated that Sally's hurricane-force winds have extended their reach to some 45 miles from the storm's center, adding that tropical storm-force winds will be felt up to 125 miles outward.

Across the US Gulf Coast, residents may experience a storm surge of anywhere between 1 and 7 feet should the hurricane make landfall at high tide. Though storm surge predictions were eased somewhat when compared to Monday's forecast, Sally's slow-moving nature is likely to cause "historic flooding."

Hurricane Sally is forecast to bring between 10 and 20 inches of rainfall to the region, with isolated amounts of 30 inches to communities situated "inland of the central Gulf Coast from the western Florida Panhandle to far southeastern Mississippi."

"Historic flooding is likely with extreme life-threatening flash flooding likely through Wednesday," the NHC warns. "In addition, this rainfall will lead to widespread moderate to major flooding on area rivers."

After landfall, and once the storm moves further inland, officials predict the hurricane will cause an additional 4 to 8 inches of rainfall. The NHC adds that isolated tornadoes "may occur" throughout Tuesday into Wednesday in the Florida Panhandle and portions of southern Alabama.

As state officials have already initiated states of emergency and called for mandatory evacuations of at-risk regions along the coastline, US President Donald Trump stated late Monday that his administration was monitoring the storm, and that they are "[fully engaged](#)" with local authorities on the matter.

Although Hurricane Sally comes less than a month after Hurricane Laura struck the area, the dangerous cyclone isn't the only one of concern to the NHC, as there are three other hurricanes that have also formed in the Atlantic Ocean.

The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season has so far been the most active in recorded history, with the NHC now having recorded 20 named storms in a period of just three months. The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [previously noted in a revised August 2020 forecast](#) that this year's hurricane season would be "extremely active."

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US Navy Aims to Have USS Ford Carrier's Systems Rigged 'So Things Don't Break' By 2022
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

A top American naval official said at a recent symposium that while significant progress has been made in readying the first-in-class USS Gerald R. Ford for duty, the aircraft carrier is not likely to deploy before 2022. The warship was scheduled to enter service in 2018 and the delays have already helped bring down one Navy secretary.

At the annual symposium hosted by the Tailhook Association fraternal nonprofit group on September 12, Rear Adm. John Meier, the head of Naval Air Forces Atlantic, said the Ford won't be ready for at least another year and a half.

The issue we are working closely on is building out of the gate reliability, making sure [the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS)] and [Advanced Arresting Gear (AAG)] has the right spares, parts and equipment in the event that something breaks," [Meier said, according to Defense News](#). "But it's also making sure we have the right procedures and methodologies so those things don't break."

"We're still not where we want to be, but we've made great strides and we're getting better every year," he added.

The first in a new class of aircraft carriers originally intended to replace the aging Nimitz-class carriers, the USS Ford boasts a bevy of new systems, including the EMALS, AAG, high-speed munitions elevators and a new propulsion system, among 19 other new tech items. However, each of these systems has had to overcome major design flaws that have delayed the Ford from its expected first tour of duty in 2018. The warship is also significantly over-budget, [costing more than \\$13 billion at last estimate](#).

For example, when the warship was delivered to the Navy in 2018, not one of the 11 weapons elevators, which lift munitions up to the flight deck to be loaded onto waiting aircraft, was working. Then-Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer promised they would be online by the summer of 2019, [telling US President Donald Trump, "The elevators will be ready when she pulls out, or you can fire me."](#) More than a year later, Spencer is gone - thanks to [ascandal involving a pardoned US Navy SEAL - but just six of the elevators are working](#).

The advanced EMALS, which launches aircraft off the front of the ship and into the skies, has been frustratingly unreliable as well. Even after years of fine-tuning the new system, it [broke down during a "historic underway" this past June](#), leaving the carrier's 80-odd aircraft stuck in

the hangar. Previous carriers used a steam-powered system that was clunky, if reliable. Shipmaker Huntington Ingalls has promised that if the EMALS is working correctly, it is faster than a steam catapult, but that “if” remains as important as ever.

The continued delays led the Navy to [fire the head of the Ford's program office](#) in July. In March, [then-acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly said the fourth ship](#) in the Ford class, the USS Doris Miller recently bought by Congress, would likely be the last of its class. The second and third Ford-class carriers, the USS John F. Kennedy and USS Enterprise, are at various stages of construction.

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US Air Force Reveals Previously Unknown Advanced Fighter 'Has Already Flown'
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

The US Air Force's acquisition chief revealed at a Tuesday forum not only that a demonstrator aircraft for the Next Generation Air Dominance (NGAD) program already exists, but that it's already flown, too.

At the virtual 2020 Air, Space and Cyber Conference on Tuesday, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Will Roper said the NGAD program, which aims to deliver a new advanced fighter jet every five years, was advancing at a pace never before seen.

“NGAD right now is designing, assembling, testing in the digital world - exploring things that would have cost time and money to wait for physical world results,” [Roper said, according to Military.com](#). “NGAD has come so far that the full-scale flight demonstrator has already flown in the physical world.”

He later confirmed to Defense News: “We've already built and flown a full-scale flight demonstrator in the real world, and we broke records in doing it. We are ready to go and build the next-generation aircraft in a way that has never happened before.”

Roper said the program had advanced so quickly as compared to previous programs because of a new digital engineering concept that had streamlined the process. However, he declined to expand on it, noting that “we don't want our adversaries to know what” those methods are. In June, the Pentagon [finalized plans for a “Digital Century Series”](#) program that would introduce a new aircraft every five years, each of which would [fit into a larger “family of systems.”](#) The idea is derived from a slew of fighter jets adopted by the Air Force in the 1950s and 1960s beginning with the F-100 Super Sabre, that was called the “Century Series.” None was ever elevated to being the Air Force's sole or primary interceptor or attack aircraft, but each worked with several other aircraft with varying roles in the same skies.

[Each of the Century Series jets pioneered one or two new technologies](#), which is one reason they were developed so quickly. The F-100 Super Sabre, for example, was the Air Force's first fighter capable of breaking the sound barrier in level flight and took just 2.5 years to develop. By comparison, the Lockheed Martin X-35 tester took seven years to proceed from idea to flying aircraft, including a slew of new and unproven technologies. It then took another five years to

become the F-35A, then another 10 years before it actually entered US Air Force service in 2016.

On the other hand, each of the Century Series jets had its shortcomings, too. The F-100, for example, [had a nasty problem of crashing just before landing](#) because designers had not included any stabilizing “wing fences” on the aircraft.

“All the Century aircraft weren’t successful,” [Roper told Breaking Defense in April 2019](#), “but enough were.”

The end result was that, by the late 1960s, the Air Force had solidified the technologies new to the 1950s and rapidly advanced them, making it possible to create powerful aircraft like the F-15 Eagle and F-16 Fighting Falcon, which are still in use today.

It’s unclear if the demonstrator mentioned by Roper is just a concept aircraft or actually intended to be the first of the Digital Century Series jets, [the Drive pointed out, noting a new US fighter prototype](#) hasn’t debuted in 20 years, since the Boeing X-32 and Lockheed Martin X-35 flew in 2000.

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Alleged Controlled IDF Explosion Prompts False Reports of Strikes on Gaza
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

A missile strike was reported in the central Gaza Strip by locals on social media early Wednesday morning, but turned out to be the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) destroying a suspicious object in a supposed controlled detonation.

Initial reports suggested a missile fired by an Israeli aircraft had struck empty land east of Deir al-Balah, a town in central Gaza. However, [subsequent reports claim the explosion came](#) from the controlled detonation of an object by the IDF.

The explosion followed [a rocket attack on the Israeli cities of Ashdod and Ashkelon](#) Tuesday evening. One of the rockets got through the Iron Dome air defense system and [struck a street in Ashdod, about 15 miles north of the Gaza Strip](#), injuring two people.

That attack happened at the same time as [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was signing an agreement](#) with the leaders of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates in Washington, DC, in which the two Gulf Arab states extended diplomatic recognition to Israel. Palestinian leaders have called the deal a “betrayal,” as they are just the third and fourth Arab states to recognize Israel’s existence since its foundation in 1948.

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‘Brought Us to the Brink’: Trump’s Peacemaker Posturing Belies Global Deepening of US
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

US President Donald Trump has postured as a peacemaker and ender of “endless wars,” but one peace activist told Sputnik that Trump had greatly increased the risk of a major war around the globe by expanding US wars and undoing vital peace agreements - and his alternative on the November ballot isn’t much better.

On Tuesday, Trump hosted the [leaders of Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Bahrain](#) at the White House, where the two Arab nations signed agreements recognizing Israel as a sovereign nation and extending full diplomatic relations to it, making them the third and fourth Arab nations to do so since Israel’s founding in 1948. [Trump has called the UAE deal a “historic peace agreement”](#) and hailed his [nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize](#).

Medea Benjamin, co-founder of women’s peace group Code Pink, told [Radio Sputnik’s Fault Lines](#) on Tuesday that Trump has brought the US “to the brink of war,” but even though most Americans disapprove of US militarism, they aren’t angry, because it isn’t Americans who die in America’s wars.

[Interview begins at 85:50]

“He’s actually put more troops in the Middle East, including in Saudi Arabia, where it’s a very dangerous move to have US troops in a place where many people consider the holiest sites for Islam” to be, Benjamin told hosts Shane Stranahan and Jamarl Thomas.

“He has brought us to the brink of war. Remember in January, when he killed [Quds Force commander Maj. Gen. Qasem] Soleimani, a general from Iran, and by pulling out of the Iran nuclear deal he has not only put us on the brink of war with Iran, but he’s inflamed all of the conflicts in the Middle East,” Benjamin noted.

“He has vetoed congressional votes that included Republicans to stop the US from assisting the Saudi bombing of Yemen, which has been totally catastrophic. He has been bragging about arms sales not only to the Saudis, but to the [United Arab] Emirates and to other repressive [Persian] Gulf countries,” she said, adding that “he has brought us into a new cold war with China.”

Indeed, on Tuesday, [Trump said he “would have no problem” selling Gulf states](#) the advanced F-35 Joint Strike Fighter stealth aircraft. The UAE is Riyadh’s primary ally in its war against the Houthi movement in Yemen, which ousted Saudi ally and Yemeni President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi in 2015. The only other operator of the advanced fighter jet in the Middle East is Israel, [after Turkey was kicked out of the program](#).

However, Trump’s challenger in the November 2020 presidential election, Democratic nominee and former US Vice President Joe Biden, offers little alternative, Benjamin cautioned.

“We have two war parties,” she said, noting that Trump’s predecessor and the president under whom Biden served, Barack Obama, “didn’t deserve the Nobel Peace Prize” given to him in 2009. “Joe Biden is terrible on most of his foreign policy. And they were better on Iran and Cuba, but not very much more than that.”

“So I’m not trying to say that the Democrats would lead us into a peaceful future,” Benjamin said. “Unfortunately, the American people are much more advanced than the two major parties are when it comes to war and peace issues. They’re the ones who want to get us out of the wars. The polls show that even the majority of Republicans think that the US’ continued presence in Afghanistan and Iraq is wrong, which is why Trump - smarter than Biden - says, ‘I’m gonna get us out of there.’ Well he’s had almost four years now to do it, and he hasn’t done it. So yes, the Democrats are not much better.”

“Bernie Sanders was much better when it came to foreign policy, and a lot of people were very excited about his proposals to cut the Pentagon budget. The majority of people want to cut the Pentagon budget, and yet, when it came up in Congress to just cut it by a mere 10%, we couldn’t even get a majority of Democrats to go for that.”

However, she said that while many Americans are opposed to the wasting of “trillions of dollars” as well as “American blood,” they may be opposing the wars “maybe not for very generous reasons, probably many of them because they don’t give a damn about places like Iraq or Afghanistan or Yemen.”

“Most of the wars now are not being fought by US troops on the ground but things like proxy wars, drone warfare, commandos,” she said, noting this is why Americans are not demonstrating in the streets calling for peace, “but certainly the polls show that that’s what they want.”

However, Benjamin also attributed this lack of mass demonstrations to the “failure of the peace movement.”

“We haven’t been able to connect these issues of the environment, Black Lives Matter, of gun control issues, in a way that people really, really get it and are willing to do more to force their politicians to say, ‘Cut the damn Pentagon budget and give us money for the Green New Deal, cut the Pentagon budget and give us money for Medicare for All.’ So I think we’re doing better in that sense. There are organizations like the Poor People’s Campaign that have made the issue of decreasing the Pentagon budget and militarism a major plank in their platform. And we have the Movement for Black Lives that definitely sees this as connected.”

“So I think we have to do more to connect these issues and then to really put politicians on the line. Everybody who voted against the 10% cut to the Pentagon should’ve heard from their constituents. And we at Code Pink have been trying to do this, but we need more people involved and more groups that have a bigger constituency than we do,” Benjamin told Sputnik. That said, Benjamin urged “vote for Biden, because on ... a number of important domestic issues he is way better than Trump and certainly on the foreign policy issues, he is more likely to be pressured, just like he has been pressured on the issues of the environment and health care ... We’ve gotten hundreds of organizations to contact his campaign and actually have discussions with his campaign. We can’t even get near the Trump people, when we send them the same letters we get zero response.”

“The fact that [Biden got on the event last night by the Poor People’s Campaign](#) means he feels the pressure of the religious community that’s come together to [say ‘no’ to poverty, militarism and racism](#). The fact that he has changed his positions on a number of issues because of grassroots pressure. I think we do have much more possibility of influencing,” she said.

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COVID-19 Vaccine Likely Available for Public Use in November, Top Chinese Scientist Says

COVID-19 vaccines being developed in China might be available for use by the general public as early as November, according to a top scientist with the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Wu Guizhen, the CDC's chief biosafety expert, revealed during a Monday night program on Chinese public service broadcaster CCTV that clinical trials of several vaccine candidates have been progressing well and preparations are currently being made for the drugs to go into mass production.

"I joined the experimental group and had a coronavirus shot in April. I've felt quite good in the past few months, nothing abnormal. The process of inoculation did not cause any localized pain," Wu said, [according to the South China Morning Post \(SCMP\)](#).

Wu also expressed optimism about the candidates' efficacy and safety.

"We expect them to remain effective for one to three years ... [but] the results will need to be observed for a longer time," she noted, adding that experts have been determining which facilities should mass-produce vaccines.

"Two [plants] have won approval, and the appraisal of a third is under way," Wu said.

In a CCTV interview broadcast last month, Zheng Zhongwei, director of the Chinese National Health Commission's science and technology development center, revealed that China had been providing a locally produced COVID-19 vaccine candidate to selected people, including medical personnel and border inspection officials, since July.

Zheng also noted that the drug would soon be administered to people in the transport, service and wet market industries in hopes of creating an "immunity barrier," the SCMP reported.

The latest news comes after the World Health Organization (WHO) earlier this month said it does not expect widespread COVID-19 vaccinations until mid-2021.

"We are really not expecting to see widespread vaccination until the middle of next year," WHO spokesperson Margaret Harris said during a UN briefing in Geneva, Switzerland, earlier this month, stressing the importance of ensuring the vaccines are safe and effective, [Reuters reported](#).

"This phase 3 must take longer because we need to see how truly protective the vaccine is and we also need to see how safe it is," she added, not referring to any one vaccine candidate in particular.

According to WHO, there are [35 candidate vaccines](#) around the world currently undergoing clinical evaluation.

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Video: Smoke From Raging Western Wildfires Drifts to US East Coast

The US National Weather Service (NWS) on Tuesday confirmed that smoke from the wildfires in the country's west is being "carried by the jet stream across the Mid-Atlantic."

"Satellite images this morning show #smoke aloft moving over much of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. This smoke is obscuring the sun, and will keep temperatures a few degrees cooler

today than what would be observed if the smoke was not present,” the [official NWS Baltimore-Washington Twitter account reported on Tuesday](#).

A few hours later, the [same NWS account tweeted](#) that the smoke across the Mid-Atlantic is moving overhead between 15,000 and 25,000 feet above ground level.

Social media users also shared photos of the smoke in the sky above the Washington, DC, area.

“Crazy — Smoke from West Coast wildfires seen over the Lincoln Memorial here in Washington DC,” [one user posted](#), along with a photo of the building.

“The sky in WASHINGTON DC is going to be orange this evening around sunset from the smoke out west. The climate crisis is a global crisis,” another user commented.

Some smoke from the deadly wildfires has even reached parts of upstate New York and Canada.

The wildfires in the western US continue to rage, with the blazes in California alone having burned down more than 3 million acres, damaged or destroyed more than 5,000 structures and taken at least 20 lives, [according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection](#). Oregon has also been greatly impacted by the fires, with at least 10 people dead in the state and thousands of others displaced as a result. State officials confirmed Monday that 22 individuals were confirmed missing.

“Without question, our state has been pushed to its limits,” Oregon Governor Kate Brown said at a [news briefing Monday](#).

According to [Oregon state data](#), approximately 1 million acres in the state have burned down, and at least 22 people are missing.

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US Navy Requests Nearly \$600 Million to Develop Fleet of Unmanned Ships

A recent Congressional Research Service Report reveals that the US Navy may swap out traditional ships for crewless vessels, which it hopes to develop in the coming years.

According to the [report](#), the Navy plans on developing and producing several types of large unmanned vehicles (UVs) and is requesting about \$580 million in research and development funding for fiscal year 2021 for these UVs and their enabling technologies.

“The Navy wants to acquire these large UVs as part of an effort to shift the Navy to a more distributed fleet architecture,” the report notes, also indicating that such a fleet would include fewer guided-missile cruisers and destroyers and more frigates and littoral combat ships.

The report also notes that while smaller UVs can be deployed from manned Navy ships and submarines to “extend the operational reach of those ships and submarines,” large UVs are more likely “to be deployed directly from pier to perform missions that might otherwise be assigned to manned ships and submarines.”

In addition, large unmanned surface vehicles (USVs) would be between 200 and 300 feet long and would be able to carry weapons such as “anti-surface warfare and strike payloads, meaning

principally anti-ship and land-attack missiles.” The Navy plans on developing two USV prototypes next year, one in 2022 and another in 2023.

Medium USVs, on the other hand, would be between 45 and 190 feet long and mostly used for electronic warfare systems as well as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance payloads. In July, the Navy awarded a \$35 million contract to L3 Technologies Inc. to develop a prototype for a medium USV.

The report also cites a desire to stay ahead of China as one factor behind the Navy’s decision to invest in more unmanned vessels.

“The Navy wants to employ accelerated acquisition strategies for procuring these large UVs, so as to get them into service more quickly. The Navy’s desire to employ these accelerated acquisition strategies can be viewed as an expression of the urgency that the Navy attaches to fielding large UVs for meeting future military challenges from countries such as China,” the report notes.

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It's Unbelievable': Bill Gates Slams 'Mismanaged' US Response to COVID-19 Outbreak

In a recent interview with STAT News, philanthropist Bill Gates, who has long warned of the need to adequately prepare for pandemics, expressed frustration with the US’ response to the COVID-19 novel coronavirus

“You know, this has been a mismanaged situation every step of the way,” Gates said during the [interview](#). “It’s shocking. It’s unbelievable - the fact that we would be among the worst in the world.”

Gates also criticized US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Stephen Hahn, who [incorrectly cited findings](#) from a Mayo Clinic study on COVID-19 when claiming in August that convalescent plasma treatment was associated with a 35% survival benefit in patients. The technique uses plasma donated from survivors of the novel coronavirus to treat patients currently suffering from the disease. Doctors can isolate antibodies in plasma - the liquid component of blood - and then inject those antibodies into sick patients.

“This is third grade math. I mean, are you kidding? The head of the FDA got up and said it was a 35% death reduction where it’s not even a 3% reduction based on just a tiny little subset that was nonstatistical. This is unheard of,” Gates said.

When the crisis first broke out in the US, experts from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, established by Gates and his wife, contacted the Trump administration repeatedly, urging officials to devise a plan on how to accurately test for the virus.

According to Gates, the foundation has consistently demanded that commercial labs only be paid if they return COVID-19 test results within 24 hours, since anything longer than that is futile for effectively containing the disease’s spread.

“You get to write apology notes to the people you infected in the meantime,” Gates noted. “I’ve been saying this and I just don’t get why it hasn’t changed.”

In addition, Gates expressed concern that testing is still being conducted using nasopharyngeal swabs - which collect secretions from the back of the nose and throat - though the foundation's research has indicated that swabbing patients' nostrils for tests is just as accurate while also being easier to perform.

"But even today in this country, that's not 100% [of the tests]. So, you have health care workers getting coughed on and people are reluctant to take the test because of that obsolete approach is still quite prevalent," Gates said.

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Japanese Cabinet Resigns En Masse Ahead of Suga's Assumption of Premiership - Kyodo

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his Cabinet have resigned, paving the way for Yoshihide Suga, the new leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), to potentially become Japan's prime minister on Wednesday.

On Wednesday, both houses of the Japanese parliament will hold a vote to name the new prime minister, who will then appoint new ministers.

Suga, a 71-year-old politician who [holds a role in the current administration](#) as chief Cabinet secretary, is expected to pursue his predecessor's "[Abenomics](#)" policies and is currently the front-runner in the prime minister race. Suga has also [underscored the significance](#) of Japan's participation in a range of international economic agreements and has called for a revival of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

The entire Japanese government resigned, with each of the ministers submitting requests to Abe, according to Kyodo News.

Abe announced his intention to resign on August 28 due to the exacerbation his chronic ulcerative colitis, an inflammatory bowel disease, which forced him to resign from a previous term as prime minister in 2007.

Earlier [this month](#), LDP General Council chief Shunichi Suzuki said the country's next prime minister could announce a snap general election shortly after taking office on September 16.

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US in 'Difficult Position' After Venezuela Foils Yet Another Alleged Terror Plot By Americans

US citizen and ex-Marine Matthew John Heath was recently arrested in Venezuela and has been accused of plotting attacks against the country's oil industry and electricity system. The US has yet to comment on Heath's arrest, which is very "telling," Arnold August, a journalist and lecturer, told Sputnik Tuesday.

According to Venezuela's chief prosecutor Tarek Saab, Heath has ties to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and was also working with three Venezuelan co-conspirators. All four

were arrested last week near refineries on Venezuela's north Caribbean coast, [Reuters reported](#).

"We have managed to neutralize an operation that could have been one of the worst in recent times," Saab said, the [Washington Post reported](#). "A US citizen and presumed military soldier was found to be carrying out espionage activities to destabilize Venezuelan territory. He had the help of Venezuelan citizens, both military and civilian."

"The latest article by the Washington Post and others indicate to us that the US has not made any comment with regards to the capture of this ex-Marine," August, who is the author of several books, including "Cuba-US Relations: Obama and Beyond," told [By Any Means Necessary hosts Sean Blackmon and Jacquie Lugman](#).

"It's very telling. They do these things, obviously, behind the scenes, and then when they're caught red-handed, they do not say anything, or perhaps later on they will come up with some kind of story to try to distance themselves from that. Because after all, the basic, main comment or orientation by the US is that they are really in favor of a peaceful solution in Venezuela," he said.

The latest incident comes after the Venezuelan government in May said it had foiled a sea incursion attempted by "terrorist mercenaries" from Colombia, [BBC reported](#).

"They tried to carry out an invasion by sea, a group of terrorist mercenaries from Colombia, in order to commit terrorist acts in the country, murdering leaders of the revolutionary government," Venezuelan Interior Minister Nestor Reverol said at the time.

Two of those involved in the sea incursion were former US Special Forces soldiers, Luke Denman and Airan Berry, who were both sentenced to 20 years in prison by a Venezuelan court for attempting to overthrow Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro as part of the failed beach attack.

"The capture of Marines two months ago, and another one this week, indicate that it's far from being peaceful," August said. "So, the US, [US Secretary of State Mike] Pompeo and [US President Donald] Trump, are in a difficult position and have to dance around the fact that there are obvious incursions organized by the US into Venezuela that are far from being peaceful ... to blow up or destroy oil refineries in Venezuela."

He added that the US is "going to have to say something, because it's in the news, there's a lot of chat about it. But I think once again, this shows the strength of the Bolivarian Revolution. Despite the sanctions, despite the attack, despite having to deal with COVID-19 all this time with quite a bit of success, they still manage to defend themselves."

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Graphic Video: US Man Charged After Barreling SUV Through Protesters, Running Over Man by [Evan Craighead](#)

A North Carolina resident has been charged with one count of aggravated assault and bonded out of jail after allegedly running over a pedestrian photographer during a peaceful protest over the weekend in Johnson City, Tennessee.

The Johnson City Police Department [announced on Monday](#) that Jared Benjamin Lafer, a 27-year-old resident of Bakersville, North Carolina, was arrested earlier that day after surrendering himself to authorities.

The news release detailed that Lafer, booked at the Washington County Detention Center on an aggravated assault charge, was released from jail on a \$20,000 bond on Monday.

Days prior, authorities [published a release](#) seeking information related to a hit-and-run that occurred around 7:20 p.m. on Saturday at the Johnson City intersection of State of Franklin Road and Spring Street.

“The vehicle, reported by witnesses as a white Ford Expedition, had fled the scene. The pedestrian was transported to the Johnson City Medical Center for treatment of injuries sustained during the incident.”

Video of the incident was captured by a witness and [posted to social media](#) by Facebook user Brent Chaffin, who described the victim as “just a pedestrian.”

“He didn't want to get hit, he wasn't even there to protest. He's just a guy who lives downtown and walks around to take pictures,” [he said](#) on Tuesday.

Be advised, the footage below contains scenes some audiences may find offensive.

The [Johnson City Press \(JCP\) detailed](#) that the primary victim is a 31-year-old resident who was taken to the Johnson Medical Center for treatment. A 26-year-old woman was also found to have been struck by the SUV but did not have any injuries that required medical treatment.

The 31-year-old told authorities that he was walking his dog downtown and taking photographs of a Black Lives Matter protest, JCP reported, citing court documents.

He claimed that the individual driving the white SUV honked their horn and was acting aggressively toward protesters crossing the street in the crosswalk. The individual eventually grew frustrated and bumped the vehicle into the 31-year-old before running over his legs, as seen in the footage.

Victoria Grace Hewlett, a member of the New Panthers Initiative, has [organized a GoFundMe crowdfunding campaign](#) to cover a portion of the 31-year-old victim's medical bills. The campaign has raised more than \$4,200 of its \$5,000 preliminary goal as of this article's publishing.

Lafer was scheduled for arraignment in the Washington County General Sessions on September 15 at 9:00 a.m. local time.

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Top Nigerian Pornstar Jailed for Allegedly Filming Scene at Sacred Osun Shrine
by [Evan Craighead](#)

A popular Nigerian pornstar and five others have been arrested, charged and jailed by local authorities for recording an adult movie at the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and publishing the content online.

Osun State Police Command public relations officer Folashade Odoro confirmed to [Nigerian outlet Premium Times](#) on Monday that 27-year-old Tobiloba Jolaosho, better known as King

Tblak HOC, had been arrested and arraigned in a high court of Osogbo, Nigeria, on September 14 "for shooting a porn film in the Osun Osogbo shrine."

Four Nigerians and one Cameroonian, aged between 22 and 29 years old, were arrested alongside the adult film star.

"Awosunwon of Idinkele Temple, Osogbo, reported to the [sic] us that he sighted Tblakhoc dressed in Osun traditional attire in a sex movie with a naked young lady shared on the social media," Oodoro explained.

Osun, or Oshun, [is a deity](#) of the Yoruba people in southwest Nigeria. She is considered to be one of the most powerful orishas (minor gods) and commonly tied to purity, fertility, water, love and sensuality.

Oodoro told Premium Times that the video was recorded on July 25 and then published to several pornographic websites. Clips of the video were also seen on social media, where Jolaosho typically advertises his work.

Police spokesperson Opalola Yemisi [explained to the BBC](#) that the adult film star, who doubles as his own producer, may have "breached public peace" and will be called to court following an investigation.

"The accused persons are being prosecuted for acting in a film which appeared on the face of it to bear a pornographic picture of young girls who were half-naked and thereafter published or sent for public consumption," the charge sheet read, as reported by Premium Times.

Police prosecutor Idoko John accused Jolaosho and his accomplices of conspiring to commit a deliberate act of disrespect against the temple, which has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 2005.

All six individuals arrested in connection with the incident have pleaded not guilty and ordered to be remanded in the Ilesa correctional center, awaiting a September 17 ruling regarding bail.

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DoJ Initiates Criminal Inquiry Into Bolton's Tell-All Book Over Possible Leak of Classified Info by [Evan Craighead](#)

The US Department of Justice (DoJ) has initiated a criminal probe to determine if ex-national security adviser John Bolton's tell-all book, "The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir," divulged classified information to the public.

The DoJ convened a grand jury on Tuesday and subpoenaed publisher Simon & Schuster for communication records related to Bolton's tell-all, [which documented](#) his 17 months of White House employment as national security adviser to US President Donald Trump.

[The New York Times](#) was the first to report on the agency's move, which occurred following a referral issued by Trump's Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe.

"We are aware of reports that grand jury subpoenas have been issued seeking information concerning the publication of Ambassador Bolton's recent book," Bolton attorney Charles Cooper said in a [statement obtained by The Hill](#).

"Ambassador Bolton emphatically rejects any claim that he acted improperly, let alone criminally, in connection with the publication of his book, and he will cooperate fully, as he has throughout, with any official inquiry into his conduct."

[Sputnik reported in June](#) that the DoJ had attempted to block the release of Bolton's tell-all via a temporary restraining order. The request, however, was ultimately denied by senior federal judge Royce Lamberth.

Despite the failure to obtain the order, [Trump referred](#) to the judge's June 20 ruling as a "BIG COURT WIN against Bolton." He argued that the "highly respected" judge's hands were tied, due to the advanced publication and release of several copies of Bolton's book.

"Bolton broke the law and has been called out and rebuked for so doing, with a really big price to pay," [Trump tweeted](#) following Lamberth's decision, which [did note](#) Bolton "has gambled with the national security of the United States. He has exposed his country to harm and himself to civil (and potentially criminal) liability."

"[Bolton] likes dropping bombs on people, and killing them. Now he will have bombs dropped on him!" Trump concluded in his tweet.

He later declared that Bolton was "grossly incompetent" and "a liar."

Prior to the book's official release, [it was reported](#) that according to the memoir, the US president urged Chinese President Xi Jinping in June 2019 to purchase more American farm products to boost the US economy and increase Trump's chances of winning the upcoming November election.

"Make sure I win," Trump allegedly told Xi during the 2019 G-20 conference in Osaka, Japan. "I will probably win anyway, so don't hurt my farms. ... Buy a lot of soybeans and wheat and make sure we win."

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Whistleblower Revealed 'Victims of Persecution' Being Forcibly Sterilized at ICE Facility
by [Evan Craighead](#)

A nurse-turned-whistleblower at a Georgia detention center claimed acts of gross medical misconduct are being perpetrated against female immigrants detained by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). An immigration lawyer told Sputnik it was the "most shocking" human rights violation he had seen in the facility's recent history.

Staff at the LaSalle Corrections-owned Irwin County Detention Center (ICDC) of Ocilla, Georgia, engaged in "medical neglect" and "hazardous and reckless actions" regarding COVID-19 testing, hysterectomies, medical documents and additional health-related affairs of detained immigrants, the nonprofit whistleblower advocacy group Government Accountability Project and the human rights organization Project South alleged in a [joint complaint](#) filed on Monday with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG).

Immigration attorney Jason Dzubow joined [Radio Sputnik's By Any Means Necessary](#) on Tuesday and asserted to hosts Sean Blackmon and Jacquie Luqman that the acts alleged

within the complaint are the “most shocking” things he’s heard in the “15 years or more” he has spent tracking the facility.

He noted that prior to the recent detention of migrants with both criminal and clean records at the border, the primary detainees of the ICDC were men. Now, women have also been thrown into the allegedly corrupt facility “because they’re either pending removal [from the US] or they ... tried to enter the country and seek asylum, and they’re pending determination on their case,” Dzubow clarified.

“So a lot of them are just non-criminals, and a lot of them are victims of persecution and other harm and crimes,” Dzubow explained. “They’re now being detained, waiting for their day in court, which they’re entitled to under the law.”

Dawn Wooten, who was employed by the ICDC as a licensed practical nurse, alleged in the complaint that a facility doctor, whose name she [refused to disclose](#), had been performing an alarming number of hysterectomies on ICE-detained immigrant women.

“Everybody he sees has a hysterectomy - just about everybody,” Wooten said of the medical doctor.

“I’ve had several inmates tell me that they’ve been to see the doctor, and they’ve had hysterectomies, and they don’t know why they went or why they’re going.”

Wooten explained that though some women may need a hysterectomy to correct heavy menstruation or other severe issues, “everybody’s uterus cannot be that bad.”

The nurse detailed that a young detained immigrant woman had to receive a full hysterectomy after the doctor removed her healthy right ovary, instead of the left ovary, which had a problematic cyst.

“She still wanted children - so she has to go back home now and tell her husband that she can’t bear kids ... she said she was not all the way out under anesthesia and heard him [doctor] tell the nurse that he took the wrong ovary,” Wooten recounted.

As for the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the complaint issued to the DHS OIG claimed “medical neglect” had occurred, with detained immigrants being denied COVID-19 testing at the ICDC, which Dzubrow highlighted is a for-profit facility.

Furthermore, the private facility’s employees are allegedly permitted to “work while they are symptomatic awaiting COVID-19 test results.” There were also reported incidences of ICDC management “hiding information from employees and detained immigrants about who has tested positive for COVID-19.”

Dzubow stated that he hopes that despite the US’ numbness to such objectively shocking details, the complaint will at the very least, bring about a DHS investigation into the doctor who allegedly performed the series of questionable hysterectomies.

“For years, advocates in Georgia have raised red flags about the human rights violations occurring inside the Irwin County Detention Center,” Project South Staff Attorney Priyanka Bhatt stated in the organization’s [Monday release](#) on the matter.

“We call on DHS to conduct an investigation into the Irwin County Detention Center in order to protect the health and safety of the detained immigrants and the workers there.”

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'Trump & Friends' - Cartoon

Like that one friend who invites themselves to your house and then never goes away, US President Donald Trump stunned the hosts of the Fox News program "Fox & Friends" on Tuesday by announcing that he would be appearing on the show every week until Election Day. Trump's entitled remark seemed to stun the morning news hosts, particularly Steve Doocy, as he responded unfavorably to the president by saying that "Fox has not committed" to having Trump on-air so often.

The moment was made even more awkward when Trump did not respond to Doocy's comment. "All right. Donald Trump, President of the United States. He's now gone to talk to [Fox News White House correspondent] John Roberts, maybe," the Fox host added as the interview abruptly ended with the commander-in-chief's graceless signoff.