01/13/21 Wednesday

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Tennessee Lawmaker Introduces Bill to Add Statue of Dolly Parton to State Capitol Grounds
by Mary F.

Dolly Parton, 74, is an American singer and songwriter best known for her country music. Parton made her debut in 1967 with her album "Hello, I'm Dolly," which propelled her successful career. She was born in Sevierville, Tennessee in 1946.

State Rep. John Mark Windle, a Democrat in the Tennessee legislature, on Tuesday introduced a bill to add a statue of Parton to the state's Capitol grounds in Nashville to recognize her contributions to her home state. Windle's bill calls for the establishment of a fund for the statue's design, construction and installation, which would be paid for by gifts, grants and other donations, The Hill reported.

Parton is a humanitarian who has a history of giving back. In addition to helping fund research for Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine, the Grammy winner has engaged in other philanthropic pursuits, such as founding the Imagination Library, a book-gifting program that provides free books to children in the US, the UK, Canada, Australia and the Republic of Ireland.

Last year, thousands of people signed a petition to replace statues of Confederate leaders in Tennessee with new figures depicting Parton.

"History should not be forgotten, but we need not glamorize those who do not deserve our praise. Instead, let us honor a true Tennessee hero, Dolly Parton," wrote Alex Parsons, the individual who started the petition.

"Aside from her beautiful music, which has touched the hearts and lives of millions of Americans, Dolly Parton's philanthropic heart has unquestionably changed the world for the better," Parsons added.

"From the Dollywood foundation that has provided books and scholarships to millions of American children, to the millions of dollars she has donated to dozens of organizations such as the Red Cross and COVID-19 research centers, Dolly Parton has given more to this country and this state than those Confederate officers could ever have hoped to take away," Parsons continued.

Last month, former US President Barack Obama said a major "screwup" of his administration was failing to honor Parton with the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

"That's a mistake. I'm shocked," Obama said on CBS' "The Late Show" after host Stephen Colbert asked how it was possible the singer had yet to receive the US' highest civilian award. "She deserves one," Obama said, adding that he would call US President-elect Joe Biden about the matter.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

House Democrats Urge for Probe of 'Suspicious' Capitol Tours on Day Before 6th January Riot
by Mary F.

US President Donald Trump loyalists stormed the Capitol building in Washington, DC, on January 6 to protest against the certification of the Electoral College, attempting to prevent Joe Biden from being confirmed as the winner of the 2020 presidential election.
A coalition of more than 30 House Democrats, led by Rep. Mikie Sherrill (D-NJ), are urging for an investigation into "suspicious" Capitol tours that occurred the day before a mob of Trump supporters breached the Capitol building.
Sherrill on Wednesday sent a letter to acting House Sergeant at Arms Timothy Blodgett, acting Senate Sergeant at Arms Jennifer Hemmingway and acting Capitol Police Chief Yogananda Pittman, calling for an "immediate investigation into the suspicious behavior and access given to visitors to the Capitol Complex on Tuesday, January 5, 2021 — the day before the attacks on the Capitol."
According to the lawmakers, there was an "extremely high number of outside groups in the complex" on January 5, "which is unusual given that public tours of the Capitol ended in March 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic," The Hill reported.
The lawmakers also noted that some of the visitors "appeared to be associated" with the "Stop the Steal" rally that took place at the White House on January 6, the same day the Capitol was breached.
"Members of the group that attacked the Capitol seemed to have an unusually detailed knowledge of the layout of the Capitol Complex. The presence of these groups within the Capitol Complex was indeed suspicious … Given the events of January 6, the ties between these groups inside the Capitol Complex and the attacks on the Capitol need to be investigated," the lawmakers added.
Sherrill is not the only lawmaker concerned with security at the Capitol.
In comments this week to the Boston Globe, Rep. Ayanna Pressley's (D-MA) chief of staff Sarah Groh said that all the panic buttons in Pressley's office had been removed before the mob assaulted the Capitol.
"Every panic button in my office had been torn out — the whole unit," Groh told the outlet, adding that she did not know why the devices had been removed.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

'Squad' Member Rep. Pressley's 'Panic' Button Reportedly Sabotaged Prior to Capitol Insurrection
by Morgan Artyukhina

Police departments and military commands across the United States are probing their membership for potential participation in the January 6 insurrection as Pentagon leaders issued a memorandum to all service members reminding them of their oaths ahead of the January 20 transition of power.

The panic button in the Capitol building office of US Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA) was apparently destroyed before the January 6 storming of the building by supporters of US President Donald Trump, the congresswoman's chief of staff reported on Wednesday.
Sometime before the insurrection last Wednesday in which Trump supporters swarmed the US Capitol and dispersed Congress in an attempt to halt certification of an election Trump claimed was fraudulent, the "panic" button in one progressive lawmaker's office was destroyed.
Sarah Groh, Pressley's chief of staff, related the incident to the Boston Globe on Tuesday, noting that the lawmaker's staff noticed the missing button while rushing to barricade the door to Pressley's office.
"Every panic button in my office had been torn out - the whole unit," Groh told the paper, noting they could summon no rationale as to why and that the button had been used before. She said Pressley had originally intended to arrive later in the afternoon, but changed her schedule to come earlier in the day after security advised her to avoid the growing crowds gathered for Trump's "Stop the Steal" rally.
"The second I realized our 'safe room' from the violent white supremacist mob included treasonous, white supremacist, anti masker Members of Congress who incited the mob in the first place, I exited," Pressley said on Twitter Tuesday, also making a connection between lawmakers who refused to wear masks and increasing number of her colleagues testing positive for COVID-19.
Pressley is part of an informal grouping of progressive women of color in the House of Representatives dubbed "the Squad," who have aroused particular anger among Trump supporters for their outspoken opposition to Trump's policies.
Rep. Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), another Squad member, said on an Instagram Live broadcast on Tuesday that she thought she might die during the insurrection, afraid that conservative colleagues might give away her location to the angry mob.
"I did not know if I was going to make it to the end of that day alive," she said, adding she "didn't even feel safe around other members of Congress" who she said sympathized with the QAnon and white supremacist ideas driving the insurrection. She added that it was "not an exaggeration" to say that several lawmakers were "nearly assassinated" that day.
Indeed, subsequent analysis of photographs and video footage taken during the insurrection has revealed that an organized, militant faction existed among the insurrectionists, who brought not only loaded weapons but also zip ties used by police for restraining people in their custody.
Police have also discovered several improvised explosives in and around the Capitol, including a pickup truck parked nearby that was loaded down with "homemade napalm bombs" and an M4 carbine like those used by US Special Forces.
However, it wasn't just the attendees of Trump's rally outside the White House who stormed the Capitol: several Capitol Police officers have been suspended or are under investigation for friendly actions toward the insurrectionists, including snapping selfies together and even opening doors and barricades and giving the rioters directions once inside.
Five people died in the failed putsch, including a US Capitol Police officer and a Trump supporter who was shot outside the Senate chamber by security. At least 20 people have been arrested so far, and the Department of Justice said Tuesday it has 170 open cases in connection with people involved in the insurrection, some of whom may face federal sedition and conspiracy charges.

Thousands of US National Guard troops have been deployed to the city to ensure an orderly and peaceful transition of power on January 20, when US President-elect Joe Biden is due to be sworn in. Trump has spurned the ceremony and seemingly walked back his condemnations of the January 6 violence, although a new statement on Wednesday condemned any further violent actions by his supporters.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Airbnb Cancels Reservations in DC Area During Inauguration Week Over Fears of Further Violence
by Morgan Artyukhina

Federal prosecutors said on Tuesday they had opened close to 200 cases on suspects related to the January 6 insurrection at the US Capitol and would be seeking charges of conspiracy and sedition in at least some of the cases.
A grassroots campaign to convince renters and hotels not to accept reservations in the national capital until after the January 20 presidential inauguration has scored a major success after booking service Airbnb signed on to the proposal on Wednesday.
Airbnb said in a statement that the company would cancel existing reservations made in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area during the week of Inauguration Day and refund the customers, as well as block any new reservations from being made.
The decision comes amid mounting pressure from governments at multiple levels as well as private citizens, after right-wing groups such as the Proud Boys reportedly booked rooms across the city earlier this month in order to participate in the January 6 “Stop the Steal” rally that became a violent insurrection in which five people died.
After US President Donald Trump urged his followers to take action against the certification of what he claimed were fraudulent election results showing US President-elect Joe Biden as the winner, thousands of his followers stormed the US Capitol building and temporarily dispersed Congress as they ransacked the national legislature.
In the end, their efforts were unsuccessful, and Congress reconvened to finish certifying the results after police evicted the rioters from the Capitol. Thousands of US National Guard troops have since flooded into the city to maintain order, with the number approaching 20,000 as of Wednesday.
In the days that followed, a “Don’t Rent DC” campaign arose, driven by city residents alarmed that insurrectionists from groups known for targeting minorities such as Black, Latino and LGBTQ people for violence had been staying in their neighborhoods. The city is 46% Black, 11.3% Latino and 9.8% LGBTQ, according to census and polling data.
Soon, progressive policy advocacy group MoveOn had begun a petition asking Airbnb to incentivize its renters not to accept offers during the week of the inauguration, after federal police reported discovering new plans for violent protests during the transfer of power.
DC area activists groups, such as Black Lives Matter DC and Shut Down DC, also mounted social media pressure on Airbnb as well as area hotels to enact similar policies.

Airbnb further noted on Wednesday that it had banned several users from its platform after law enforcement notified the company of the names of "numerous individuals who are either associated with known hate groups or otherwise involved in the criminal activity at the Capitol Building."
In the aftermath of the insurrection, at least 20 people have been arrested on federal charges stemming from their participation, and the Department of Justice has more than 170 open cases. Acting United States Attorney for the District of Columbia Michael Sherwin told reporters on Tuesday the DoJ would be seeking federal sedition and conspiracy charges against at least some of the suspects.
Trump is also expected to be charged with "incitement of insurrection" in a new article of impeachment by the House on Wednesday. Unlike his first impeachment in December 2019, key leading figures in Congress from Trump's own Republican Party have signed off on the motion, including Rep. Liz Cheney (R-WY) and reportedly even Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), which could remove Trump from office. Regardless, Trump is expected to step down on January 20 when Biden is sworn in as the next president.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Trump Says 'Violence Has No Place In Our Movement' in New Video Denouncing Insurrection by Morgan Artyukhina

The FBI was reported earlier this week to have discovered plans by right-wing groups to hold "armed protests" in all 50 US states and the District of Columbia during the week of US President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration.
In a new video on Wednesday, US President Donald Trump denounced the violence by his supporters at the Capitol last week. His statement comes a day after a letter by Pentagon leaders reminding US servicemembers of their oaths and amid reports of further plots against the forthcoming inauguration of Biden.
"I want to be very clear: I unequivocally condemn the violence that we saw last week," Trump said in the video shared on the White House Twitter account due his own being taken down by the tech giant. "Violence and vandalism have absolutely no place in our country and no place in our movement. 'Making America Great Again' has always been about defending the rule of law, supporting the men and women of law enforcement and upholding our nation's most sacred traditions and values."
"Mob violence goes against everything I believe in and everything our movement stands for. No true supporter of mine could ever endorse political violence. No true supporter of mine could ever disrespect law enforcement or our great American flag. No true supporter of mine could ever threaten or harass their fellow Americans. If you do any of these things, you are not supporting our movement you are attacking it and you are attacking our country. We cannot tolerate it," he continued.
Trump noted there had been "too many mobs" over the last year, pointing the finger not only at his own right-wing supporters but also the left.

"There is never a justification for violence. No excuses, no exceptions. America is a nation of laws," Trump continued, saying that insurrectionists who attacks the US Capitol on January 6 "will be brought to justice."

He urged his supporters to explore ways to "ease tensions, calm tempers and help to promote peace in our country." He denounced the "potential threats" of protests in Washington, DC, and across the country reported by law enforcement to be planned by right-wing groups in the coming days, while stating that people have the right to peacefully voice their opinions.

Trump then turned his attention to the "unprecedented assault on free speech we have seen in recent days," seemingly referring to the permanent banning of his accounts on social media sites including Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and the takedown of sites such as Parler, a messaging site where some participants in the insurrection planned their actions.

"These are tense and difficult times. The efforts to censor, cancel and blacklist our fellow citizens are wrong and they are dangerous. What is needed now is for us to listen to one another, not to silence one another. All of us can choose by our actions to rise above the rancor and find common ground and shared purpose," Trump said. "Today I am calling on all Americans to overcome the passions of the moment and join together as one American people. Let us choose to move forward united, for the good of our families, our communities, and our country."

Notably absent from Trump's video was any mention of his historic second impeachment by the US House of Representatives earlier on Wednesday. The bipartisan move charged Trump with "inciting insurrection" for his actions leading up to, during, and after the January 6 putsch attempt.

The storming of the US Capitol building came shortly after a "Stop the Steal" rally hosted by Trump outside the White House at which Trump urged his followers to take action and stop the certification of the November 3, 2020, election results then underway in Congress. Trump has claimed the results were fraudulent, accusing Democrats and sympathetic tech companies of conspiring to deliver victory to Biden instead of him.

Five people died in the insurrection and Congress was temporarily dispersed as thousands of Trump's followers stormed the legislature, although the movement ultimately failed and the certification was completed after they were removed from the building by security. Thousands of troops have been sent to garrison DC against further insurrectionary plots, which federal investigators have reportedly uncovered, and the Department of Justice has opened nearly 200 cases and arrested more than 20 people in connection to the riot.

Biden is due to be sworn in on January 20.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Photos: China Rolls Out 'Super Bullet Maglev Train' That Uses New High-Temperature Superconductor

by Morgan Artyukhina

China announced plans for two new maglev train routes as part of its vast expansion of high-speed rail travel: one from Shanghai to Hangzhou and one from Guangzhou to Shenzhen.
China unveiled a prototype for a new kind of maglev train on Wednesday with the potential to become the fastest land vehicle on the planet.
The launch ceremony was held at Southwest Jiaotong University in Chengdu, where the designers presented the train's locomotive and 165 meters of test track.
According to China's Global Times, the train uses a new high-temperature superconducting (HTS) maglev technology that's different from existing maglev trains, although both use powerful magnets to hover slightly above the track, reducing friction to practically zero. The new design is being called a "super bullet maglev train."
"High" temperature here is relative, referring to materials that behave as superconductors above negative 196.2 degrees Celsius, the boiling point of nitrogen.
"Although the theory sounds good, everyone saw it [HTS maglev technology] as a lab toy in the past, without tests in a real situation," Deng Zigang, deputy director of the university's research center for super-high-speed maglev transport in low-pressure tubes, told China's Xinhua News Agency.
By contrast, maglevs like the 30-kilometer track that connects downtown Shanghai to Pudong Airport, or the line being built between Japan's Nagoya and the capital city of Tokyo, use an older low-temperature superconducting technology.
Deng explained that instead of expensive liquid helium, their process uses liquid nitrogen, which costs just one-fiftieth the price.
The project sprang from a $9.3 million investment and was jointly created by Southwest Jiaotong University, China Railway Group Limited and China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation (CRRC). The train has a lightweight, all-carbon-fiber body.
In 2019, CRRC unveiled another similar maglev train in Qingdao intended to largely replace air travel between Shanghai and Beijing, Sputnik reported. CRRC claimed the train can hit 600 kilometers per hour; the HTS train introduced Wednesday can reportedly hit 620 kilometers per hour, which would make it the fastest in the world.
China has the world's largest high-speed rail network, accounting for two-thirds of the world's high speed track. Trains travel between 200 and 350 kilometers per hour and roughly 38,000 kilometers of track by the end of 2020, according to Xinhua, and high-speed rail ridership approached 2 billion trips in 2018.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Trump Warns Against 'Violence, Lawbreaking and Vandalism of Any Kind' Amid Calls for New Protests
by Gaby Arancibia

Since the Capitol riot, US President Donald Trump has brushed off any responsibility for the deadly unrest that claimed the lives of at least five people, including Capitol Police Officer Brian

Sicknick. Trump has stated that his remarks at the “Stop the Steal” rally were “totally appropriate" and not a call for violence.
Permanently barred from Twitter, Trump issued a statement on Wednesday through the White House press secretary's office that called for "no violence" amid reports that demonstrations were being planned ahead of Inauguration Day.
"I urge that there must be no violence, no lawbreaking and no vandalism of any kind," reads the statement. "That is not what I stand for, and it is not what America stands for. I call on all Americans to help ease tensions and calm tempers. Thank you."
Looming demonstrations noted by Trump were highlighted earlier this week in an FBI memo that warned multiple armed protests were expected to take place across the US at all 50 state capitols, including the US Capitol. The memo stated that a "storming" was being planned at state, local and federal courthouses should Trump be removed from the Oval Office before Inauguration Day.
Additionally, federal authorities revealed that an "identified armed group" planned to travel to Washington, DC, on January 16 if congressional lawmakers proceeded with measures to invoke the 25th Amendment.
"A huge uprising will occur," warned the agency, which also explained in the bulletin that "armed protests" could be organized through "at least" Inauguration Day.
At present, the nation's capital is on high alert ahead of US President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration, with thousands of National Guard troops deployed to the city. Estimates suggest more than 20,000 troops will be available to ensure security.
Trump's Wednesday statement echoed remarks the president made to reporters on Tuesday, in which he stated he wanted "no violence" and indicated that he was not responsible for the deadly riot that broke out at the US Capitol.
In light of the unrest that unfolded, multiple lawmakers, including several Republicans, have blamed Trump for inciting the riots. Officials have stressed that comments made by the president at the "Stop the Steal" rally encouraged supporters to take action to prevent the certification of the US election results, which were temporarily halted.
Trump's latest statement came as the US House of Representatives debated whether to impeach the commander-in-chief for inciting violence. The vote is expected to take place later on Wednesday, with support from Republican Reps. Liz Cheney (R-WY), John Katko (R-NY), Adam Kinzinger (R-IL), Fred Upton (R-MI), Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA) and Dan Newhouse (R-WA).
If the single impeachment article is cleared in the chamber, it will mark the second time that Trump has been impeached by House lawmakers.
Although reports suggested that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) was "pleased" with the Democrat-pushed impeachment efforts, passage of the measure in the Senate chamber seems unlikely, as the Kentucky official is "almost certainly" not convening the lawmakers on any date before January 19.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Google Halts All Political Ads Ahead of Biden Inauguration Over Deadly Capitol Riot
by Gaby Arancibia

Earlier, tech giant Google suspended US President Donald Trump's YouTube account and warned the White House the same could happen to its own page if it uploads content violating company policy.

Google announced on Wednesday that it would be suspending all political ads on its platforms until at least January 21, one day after US President-elect Joe Biden is expected to be inaugurated.

The new measure, which is set to take effect on Thursday, will also halt any ads that make reference to "impeachment, inauguration or protests at the US Capitol," according to an email sent to advertisers and reviewed by The Hill.

"We regularly pause ads over unpredictable, 'sensitive' events when ads can be used to exploit the event or amplify misleading information," the company said in a statement. "Beyond this, we have long-standing policies blocking content that incites violence or promotes hate and we will be extremely vigilant about enforcing on any ads that cross this line." "This policy will be broadly scoped across ads running through Google Ads, DV360, YouTube and AdX Authorized Buyer and is intended to block all ads related to the items outlined above".

The email also indicated there would be no exceptions made for news or merchandise advertisers, and that the new implementations stemmed from the company's Dangerous and Derogatory Content policy standards, which prohibit the promotion of hate or incitement of violence.

The temporary ad pause was first reported by Axios.

Google previously placed a ban on political advertisements after the US election, but eventually decided to lift the suspension ahead of the runoff elections in Georgia that saw control of the US Senate flip to Democrats.

The latest actions taken by the search engine giant came after pro-Trump rioters stormed the US Capitol and ransacked the federal building as congressional lawmakers intended to certify the outcome of the US presidential election. Although the violent unrest temporarily halted procedures, the joint session eventually managed to confirm Biden's win. The events claimed the lives of five individuals, including a Capitol Police officer who responded to the riot.

Earlier Wednesday, Google-owned YouTube placed a seven-day suspension on Trump's YouTube account after "new content" violated company standards; however, the video-streaming platform did not specify which video prompted the ban or which policy was violated. Comments on Trump's videos were also suspended.

Additionally, the official White House YouTube page was also issued a warning over two videos in which Trump was making remarks to reporters and another in which he was giving a speech at the US' southern border wall. Both videos were removed, and YouTube informed the page that it could face a seven-day ban if it violates company policy again.

YouTube has a three-strike rule for channels that break the platform's rules. The first violation prompts a seven-day ban, the second strike brings down a two-week ban, and the final transgression triggers account termination if all three violations occurred within a 90-day period.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Kushner, Scavino Reportedly Prevented Trump From Joining Parler, Gab After Twitter Ban
by Gaby Arancibia

US President Donald Trump ended up permanently banned from Twitter last week in the wake of the violent, deadly riot that broke out at the US Capitol following the president's remarks to supporters to not allow the US election to be "stolen."

Emerging reports on Wednesday indicated that efforts by Trump to open accounts on alternative social media platforms Parler and Gab were quickly halted by his son-in-law Jared Kushner and Dan Scavino, the president's deputy chief of staff.

Citing an outside adviser and an administration official, CNN reported that Kushner and Scavino went against a push from fellow White House aides, including personnel chief Johnny McEntee, to set up accounts for Trump on the platforms.

It's unclear how many of Trump's aides were in support of creating the new accounts or if the commander-in-chief was aware of the since-stopped operation, or if he knew that Parler was under review by Google Play and Apple's App Store.

Parler, an alternative platform favored by conservatives for its lax restrictions on users' speech, was recently booted from both Apple and Google stores, with Amazon dropping the app from its web-hosting service for repeatedly failing to effectively moderate content. Parler CEO John Matze revealed in an exclusive interview with Reuters that the app may "never" return.

Similar to Parler, Gab is an alternative platform that claims to champions free speech and is popular among conservatives. The network began to gain traction among conservatives after Twitter and similar platforms began to crack down on users associated with the alt-right movement. Parler's suspension has prompted Gab to gain hundreds of thousands of users, according to Fortune.

To date, Trump has either been permanently or indefinitely banned from the majority of mainstream social media platforms - such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitch, with Reddit banning prominent communities of his supporters - after the president was widely condemned for inciting the Capitol riot.

Trump made attempts to regain access to Twitter late Friday after his personal account was suspended; however, his efforts to circumvent the ban were not successful. It's worth noting that the president did manage to briefly send out a tweet through the @POTUS account before the account was subsequently blocked. The momentary return to Twitter saw the president complaining about Twitter infringing on free speech and Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, also claiming that he was considering the "possibilities of building out our own platform in the near future."

An effort by Gary Coby, Trump's digital director, to hand over control of his own account to the president was also fruitless.

More recently, Google-owned YouTube announced on Wednesday that it would be placing Trump's channel on a seven-day suspension after it uploaded a video that violated company

policy. The video-streaming company also issued a warning against the White House account over two videos that broke rules.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Parler CEO: Platform May 'Never' Return After Vendors Split, Amazon Drops Network
by Gaby Arancibia

In the days that followed the January 6 insurrection, alternative social media platform Parler came under fire and was soon removed from Apple and Google stores before Amazon followed suit with its own measures.

Parler CEO John Matze revealed in an exclusive interview with Reuters on Wednesday that his 2-year-old platform may not ever return after several vendors and service providers ditched the company for failing to moderate violent content.

While Matze indicated he was in talks with more than one computing service, he stated he was unsure whether Parler would see the light of day ever again. "It could be never," Matze said, before declaring, "We don't know yet."

Parler's troubles first began last Friday after US President Donald Trump was booted from Twitter and a slew of his supporters began trickling over to the app that claims that it is more supportive of free speech than other platforms. However, as the app gained popularity, Apple caught wind and issued a letter to the company that stated Parler had 24 hours to implement moderation measures to combat posts that were promoting illegal activity, such as by inciting violence.

By the end of the weekend, Parler was eventually removed from Apple and Google's online application stores. Amazon effectively placed the final nail in Parler's coffin after it announced on Sunday that it had cut the company from its web-hosting service over its poor moderation efforts.

Following the initial setbacks, Matze indicated a bevy of vendors have ditched the company. "It's hard to keep track of how many people are telling us that we can no longer do business with them," he said.

Some of the companies included American Express, online payment provider Stripe, cloud communication platform Twilio and communication software platform Slack, among others.

Despite the massive departure from vendors, Matze did note that there had been no changes to Parler's funds, which largely come from hedge fund manager Robert Mercer and his daughter Rebekah Mercer.

At present, Matze is still hoping to regain access to Amazon's web-hosting services. In fact, Parler on Monday filed a lawsuit against Amazon, claiming the tech giant had breached its contract by kicking Parler off Amazon cloud servers for political and anticompetitive reasons.

Amazon, however, has not taken the assertions well and shot back that Parler's removal was warranted after the network violated its contract by failing to remove dozens of posts that included death threats against prominent Democrats, Republicans and tech executives.

"This case is not about suppressing speech or stifling viewpoints. It is not about a conspiracy to restrain trade," reads the company's response. "Instead, this case is about Parler's demonstrated unwillingness and inability to remove from the servers of Amazon Web Services content that threatens the public safety, such as by inciting and planning the rape, torture and assassination of named public officials and private citizens."
The response added that there is "no legal basis" that would compel Amazon to "host content of this nature."
Matze informed Reuters that Parler officials were considering filing additional lawsuits against vendors that split from the company. He did not offer any specifics on which companies might be sued or on what legal grounds.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Olympic Gold Medalist Charged in Capitol Riot After Being Spotted Wearing Team Jacket
by Gaby Arancibia

Acting US Attorney for the District of Columbia Michael Sherwin announced this week that more than 170 case files have been opened, and that dozens of individuals have been charged for participating in the riot that saw US President Donald Trump's supporters overtake the US Capitol, as lawmakers worked to certify the results of the US election.
Klete Keller, a two-time Olympic gold medalist who competed with the US' swimming team, was hit with three criminal charges on Wednesday over his participation in the deadly riot that ravaged the US Capitol.
A criminal complaint filed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation notes that Keller was identified from video footage that captured him in the Capitol Rotunda, sporting a US Olympic Team jacket. The recording, which was captured by Townhall reporter Julio Rosas, showed Keller standing in between rioters and being pushed by law enforcement officials attempting to shut down the insurrection.
"At approximately fourteen minutes and thirty-eight seconds, PERSON 1 is still in the Rotunda, and the back of his jacket is again visible. PERSON 1 stands taller than a number of individuals around him and can clearly be seen as law enforcement officers repeatedly attempt to remove him and others from the Rotunda," the complaint reads.
"Additional open-source research revealed that media outlets such as SwimSwam, a news organization that covers competitive swimming and other related sports, identified this individual as possibly KLETE DERIK KELLER. Your affiant has confirmed this identification."
The complaint charges Keller with knowingly entering a restricted building to impede an official government function, disorderly conduct and obstructing law officers during the frightening ordeal.
It's unclear whether Keller has actually been taken into custody.
Obtained by the Associated Press, a statement from USA Swimming, which notes Keller has not been a member since his retirement after the 2008 Beijing Games, says the organization

respects “private individuals’ and groups’ rights to peacefully protest but in no way condone the actions taken by those at the Capitol last week.”
Although there have been calls for Keller’s medals to be stripped, the AP reported his Olympic achievements were “unlikely to be affected by the charges; however, the outlet did suggest that he may be “shunned” by USA Swimming and the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee at events featuring former Olympic athletes.
Keller’s participation in the Capitol riot was first reported by SwimSwam, a news organization launched in 2012 that covers competitive swimming. The former Olympian took part in the 2000, 2004 and 2008 Games.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Majority of American Voters Support Impeachment, Removal of Trump, Poll Shows
by Evan Craighead

After US Vice President Mike Pence's refusal to invoke the 25th Amendment and remove US President Donald Trump from office, the US House of Representatives has moved to consider an article of impeachment, accusing Trump of “incitement of insurrection” ahead of the deadly riots and storming of the Capitol building in Washington, DC, on January 6.
A new Morning Consult-Politico survey published on Monday revealed that 53% of American voters - a majority - claimed they would back the House of Representatives' impeachment of Trump for his alleged role in the January 6 riots that resulted in the deaths of five people and injuries to dozens of others.
Similarly, 54% of respondents said they would support a Senate conviction of the US president, along with his formal removal from office.
The poll, conducted from January 8-11, surveyed 1,996 registered voters and was said to have a 2% margin of error.
Though a majority of those polled expressed support for the US president's impeachment and removal from office, a closer examination of data shows the issue is still somewhat partisan.
According to the survey's breakdown, 87% of Democrats and 46% of independents polled said they approve of the House impeaching Trump, while only 13% of Republicans expressed the same view.
At the same time, 82% of Republicans stated they would disapprove of the House's impeachment, while only 39% of independents and 9% of Democrats said they would disapprove.
The remainder of respondents said they did not know or had no opinion on the matter.
Prior to Trump's 2019 impeachment, a Morning Consult-Politico survey on the matter showed similar impeachment support from American voters.
The poll, conducted December 14-15, 2019, found 50% support among respondents for the House's impeachment and Trump's removal from office. However, some 43% of respondents opposed impeachment and removal.

The US president was later impeached by the Democrat-led House on December 18, 2019, on two articles: abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. The Republican-controlled Senate later moved to acquit the US president of the charges.
Presently, Trump is facing the reality of possibly becoming the first US president to be impeached twice, as at least six House Republicans, including Rep. Liz Cheney (R-WY), have signaled they will vote for impeachment alongside House Democrats.
Despite the possibility of impeachment, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) has confirmed he will "almost certainly" not convene his legislative chamber for a vote before January 19.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Candid Confession: Feds Arrest US Woman Who Bragged About Trashing Capitol in Viral Video
by Evan Craighead

"We did break down Nancy Pelosi's office door, and someone stole her gavel and took a picture sitting in the chair flipping off the camera, and that was on Fox News," Jenny Cudd said in a viral social media video recorded during the January 6 riot in Washington, DC.
Cudd and Eliel Rosa - both Midland, Texas, residents and vocal supporters of US President Donald Trump - appeared before US Magistrate Judge Ronald Griffin on Wednesday, shortly after being arrested by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for their role in the January 6 riots that resulted in the deaths of five people and injuries to dozens of others.
"Midland residents Jenny Louise Cudd (aka 'Jenny Haning Cudd') and Eliel Rosa were taken into custody this morning by the FBI in connection with the Capitol incident," a statement provided by the US Attorney's Officeread.
Cudd and Rosa have both been charged with entering and remaining on restricted grounds and disorderly conduct, which are respectively class A and B misdemeanors. The accused face up to a year in prison for the first charge and up to to six months behind bars for the second charge.
Local Texas outlet CBS7 reported that, as of Wednesday afternoon, Cudd had been released on a personal recognizance bond, but is slated to appear in court again on a later date.
Days prior to her arrest, Cudd appeared confident that she had not violated any laws, despite her unlawful entry of the Capitol building.
"Do I think that it was wrong for us to go to the Capitol? Absolutely not. Do I think that it was wrong for me to go through an open door and get inside of the Capitol? No I don't. I didn't break any laws, I didn't do anything unlawful, and I think that's probably why the FBI and the law enforcement have not contacted me yet," Cudd told CBS7 on Friday.
According to the outlet, she repeatedly expressed that she was proud of her actions and would carry out similar acts in the future.
Cudd did note that she would not have used the word "we" in the footage that ultimately went viral and has now amassed well over 7 million views on Twitter alone, as she did not personally

break the door down. The footage was originally uploaded to Facebook by Cudd herself, but was removed from the platform when Cudd deleted her Facebook profile.
Cudd is overheard laughing while declaring that she and others "didn't vandalize anything at all" while in the Capitol building.
“But ... as I say that, we did break down Nancy Pelosi’s office door and someone stole her gavel and took a picture sitting in the chair flipping off the camera, and that was on Fox News," she confessed.
One of the men who notably sat in House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's (D-CA) chair was 60-year-old Gravette, Arkansas, resident Richard Barnett, who also supports Trump. Barnett made his first court appearance before US Magistrate Judge Erin Wiedemann on Tuesday.
Wiedmann noted that because Barnett was carrying a stun gun at the time of his crimes, a previous charge was upgraded to entering a restricted building without lawful authority while carrying a dangerous weapon. The new charge carries a maximum penalty of 10 years behind bars.
When asked about his mental health, Barnett told the court that he has been treated for "different kinds of depression."
Robert Keith Packer, a 56-year-old of Newport News, Virginia, was also booked in his hometown after going viral for his "Camp Auschwitz" hooded sweatshirt. Authorities charged him with knowingly entering or remaining in any restricted building or grounds without lawful authority and violent entry or disorderly conduct on Capitol grounds.
If convicted, Packer faces a maximum of 10 years and six months behind bars.
The Virginia man's sweatshirt, which references a Nazi concentration camp where about 1.1 million people were killed during World War II, drew the attention of tens of thousands of netizens after it was seen advertised on the user-submitted marketplace Teespring.
The online e-commerce platform responded to criticism by pulling the design and issuing an apology.
Overall, more than 100 individuals have been arrested in connection with the riot at and around the US Capitol building, according to a Wednesday count from the Associated Press.
“This is only the beginning,” said acting US Attorney for the District of Columbia Michael Sherwin earlier this week. “We’re going to focus on the most significant charges as a deterrent because, regardless of it was just a trespass in the Capitol or if someone planted a pipe bomb, you will be charged and you will be found.”

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

'Dangerous Precedent': Twitter CEO Dorsey Issues Open Letter on Decision to Ban Trump From Platform
by Evan Craighead

Following a brief suspension from the platform, Twitter warned US President Donald Trump that he would be permanently banned if he did not stop violating the platform's rules. Days later,

Twitter permanently banned the outgoing US president, citing "the risk of further incitement of violence."
Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey took to his social media platform Wednesday evening to issue a lengthy thread in response to the controversial banning of Trump's personal account.
"I do not celebrate or feel pride in our having to ban @realDonaldTrump from Twitter, or how we got here," Dorsey laid out. "After a clear warning we'd take this action, we made a decision with the best information we had based on threats to physical safety both on and off Twitter."
The Twitter CEO emphasized that he stands by Twitter's decision, as the platform "faced an extraordinary and untenable circumstance, forcing us to focus all of our actions on public safety."
"Offline harm as a result of online speech is demonstrably real, and what drives our policy and enforcement above all," he said.
At the same time, he noted that there are "real and significant ramifications" to the banning of an account - especially one with more than 88 million followers, highlighting that he believes that the move constitutes a "dangerous" precedent.
Dorsey admitted that the company needs to "look critically at inconsistencies of our policy and enforcement," examine "how our service might incentivize distraction and harm" and provide "more transparency in our moderation operations. All this can't erode a free and open global internet."
According to the Twitter CEO, his platform will attempt to achieve these goals in part by "funding an initiative around an open decentralized standard for social media."
"Our goal is to be a client of that standard for the public conversation layer of the internet. We call it @bluesky," he announced.
Dorsey's comments came around an hour after the US president informally returned to Twitter via a video tweeted by the official White House account.
Speaking on a number of issues, Trump took the time to suggest that tech companies and their platforms are committing an "unprecedented assault on free speech."
"The efforts to censor, cancel and blacklist our fellow citizens are wrong and they are dangerous," Trump stated in the White House video tweet. "What is needed now is for us to listen to one another, not to silence one another."
On Wednesday, the US House of Representatives voted to impeach the outgoing US president a second time, after accusing him of "incitement of insurrection". The charge is connected to a January 6 POTUS speech in the presence of supporters prior to a deadly protest at the US Capitol building later in the day that became a violent attack causing five deaths and widespread damage and vandalism.
Trump refuted the accusations as "a hoax", while issuing calls for his supporters to avoid violent behaviour.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

REVIEW - Trump Impeached by House Again, This Time 10 Republicans Break Ranks

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - President Donald Trump made history by becoming the first US president to be impeached twice, his political future now resting in a Senate trial that will not conclude until after the incoming administration is inaugurated on January 20.

Earlier on Wednesday, the US House voted 232-197 to impeach Trump on charges of inciting violence against the US government. Last week, pro-Trump protesters stormed Capitol Hill as Congress was certifying Democrat Joe Biden's presidential election victory. The riots came after Trump in a speech near the White House called on his supporters to not allow the election to be stolen.

The riots marked the most significant breach of the Capitol since 1814 when the British set fire to it during the war of 1812.

'CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER'

When the Democratic-controlled House impeached Trump in 2019 over charges of pressing Kiev to probe Biden family business matters, not a single Republican voted in favor of either article of impeachment. Trump was subsequently acquitted by the Republican-majority Senate in February of last year.

However, on Wednesday, ten Republicans, troubled by the way Trump handled the Capitol Hill riots, voted in favor of impeaching him.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi during comments on the floor ahead of the vote, clearly laid out their argument for impeachment.

"We know that the president of the United States incited this insurrection," Pelosi said. "He is a clear and present danger to the nation that we all love… He must go."

The Republican leader in the House, Kevin McCarthy, warned that impeaching Trump would not be appropriate at this time. However, he also said Trump was not blameless.

"I believe impeaching the president in such a short time frame would be a mistake... that doesn't mean the president is free from fault. The president bears responsibility for Wednesday's attack on Congress by mob rioters," McCarthy said on the House floor.

Senator Lindsey Graham warned that supporting the impeachment of Trump could invite further violence at a time the president is calling for calm.

"To my Republican colleagues who legitimize this process, you are doing great damage not only to the country, the future of the presidency, but also to the party," Graham said.

MINOR PROTESTS OUTSIDE CONGRESS

Hundreds of armed National Guard troops were deployed to secure the US Capitol as the impeachment proceedings against Trump commenced on Wednesday.

Extra layers of defense were hastily erected around the US Capitol. In addition to the handguns, the police on the grounds were armed with shotguns and assault rifles. Massive "non-scalable" fences encircled office buildings near the White House.

Police pushed away from the Capitol building a group of anti-Trump protesters who demanded the expulsion of lawmakers allied to Trump, a Sputnik correspondent reported on Wednesday. The protesters wanted to hang banners on the fence surrounding the capitol with the names of 121 members of congress and 12 senators whom they accuse of supporting the outgoing president.

SENATE TRIAL PROSPECTS

US Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell said the Senate will not convene before its current recess ends on January 19, which is a day before Biden's takes office.

"Given the rules, procedures, and Senate precedents that govern presidential impeachment trials, there is simply no chance that a fair or serious trial could conclude before President-elect Biden is sworn in next week," McConnell said on Wednesday.
McConnell also shot down reports that claimed he was in favor of seeing Trump impeached.
"I have not made a final decision on how I will vote and I intend to listen to the legal arguments when they are presented to the Senate," McConnell said in a statement.
It will take 67 votes (two-thirds of the 100-seat Senate) to convict Trump, which would require about 17 Republican senators to cross party lines. This seems unlikely, unless some remarkable developments fuel a mass Republican defection.
"I don't think it's likely, barring some unforeseen future event, that enough senators will vote to impeach Trump," former congressional candidate and FBI Special Counsel Coleen Rowley told Sputnik. "Not only would they be afraid of the power of that political block but also, and very understandably, they should be worried about further inciting dangerous polarization."
Financial analyst and political commentator Charles Ortel said, although it's unlikely, an eruption of more riots could change the dynamics.
"Should there be escalating violence through the looming inauguration of Joe Biden as 46th president of the United States, it is possible that enough senators might join Democrats and Independents to reach the 67 vote target," Ortel told Sputnik.
Presumptive Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, the chamber's top Democrat, in a statement on Wednesday said if Trump is convicted a vote would be held on whether to bar the New York billionaire from ever running for office again.
Trump in a video message after being impeached urged his followers to "ease tensions" amid reports of additional demonstrations ahead of Biden's inauguration. During the five-minute clip, Trump never mentioned the word impeachment.
On Tuesday, Trump told reporters that the speech he delivered on January 6 before the protesters stormed Capitol Hill was "totally appropriate." He also called the impeachment process the "continuation of the greatest witch hunt in the history of politics."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

RPT - US Senate Unlikely to Convict Trump Despite Republican Desire to Put Him in Past - Experts
WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US Senate is unlikely to convict President Donald Trump despite Republican hopes to put him in the past, although violence by Make America Great Again followers during President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration could change the situation, analysts told Sputnik.
Earlier on Wednesday, the US House voted 232-197 to impeach Trump on charges of inciting violence against the US government. On January 6, thousands of pro-Trump protesters stormed Capitol Hill as Congress was certifying Biden's presidential election victory. The riots came after Trump called on his supporters to not allow the election to be stolen.

The Senate impeachment trial will not conclude until after Biden takes over on January 20. It will take 67 votes (two-thirds of the total) to convict Trump, which would require about 17 Republican senators to cross party lines.
"I don't think it's likely, barring some unforeseen future event, that enough senators will vote to impeach Trump," former congressional candidate and FBI Special Counsel Coleen Rowley told Sputnik. "Not only would they be afraid of the power of that political block but also, and very understandably, they should be worried about further inciting dangerous polarization."
Ten Republican members of Congress voted to impeach Trump on Wednesday while reports surfaced that Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell favored impeachment. Meanwhile, Democrat and presumptive Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said if Trump is convicted, the Senate will hold a vote to bar him from ever running for office again.
Financial analyst and political commentator Charles Ortel said Trump's enemies looked unlikely to reach the two-thirds Senate majority needed to convict him, unless more riots changed the equation.
"Should there be escalating violence through the looming inauguration of Joe Biden as 46th president of the United States, it is possible that enough senators might join Democrats and Independents to reach the 67 vote target," Ortel said.
However, if the Democrats and their mainstream Republican allies pressed ahead with impeachment even after Biden took office, this would certainly backfire and only serve to strengthen US nationalism, Ortel warned.
"In the heat of the present, Democrats and establishment Republicans may believe they are close to dancing on political graves of Trumpists. In reality, they are likely ensuring stronger support for respectful nationalism, and rejection of unregulated globalism," he predicted.
On Tuesday, Trump told reporters that the speech he delivered on January 6 before the protesters stormed Capitol Hill was "totally appropriate." He said the impeachment process was the "continuation of the greatest witch hunt in the history of politics."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Senate Unlikely to Convict Trump Despite Republican Desire to Put Him in Past

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US Senate is unlikely to convict President Donald Trump despite Republican hopes to put him in the past, although violence by Make America Great Again followers during President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration could change the situation, analysts told Sputnik.
Earlier on Wednesday, the US House voted 232-197 to impeach Trump on charges of inciting violence against the US government. On January 6, thousands of pro-Trump protesters stormed Capitol Hill as Congress was certifying Biden's presidential election victory. The riots came after Trump called on his supporters to not allow the election to be stolen.
The Senate impeachment trial will not conclude until after Biden takes over on January 20. It will take 67 votes (two-thirds of the total) to convict Trump, which would require about 17 Republican senators to cross party lines.

"I don't think it's likely, barring some unforeseen future event, that enough senators will vote to impeach Trump," former congressional candidate and FBI Special Counsel Coleen Rowley told Sputnik. "Not only would they be afraid of the power of that political block but also, and very understandably, they should be worried about further inciting dangerous polarization."
Ten Republican members of Congress voted to impeach Trump on Wednesday while reports surfaced that Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell favored impeachment. Meanwhile, Democrat and presumptive Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said if Trump is convicted, the Senate will hold a vote to bar him from ever running for office again.
Financial analyst and political commentator Charles Ortel said Trump's enemies looked unlikely to reach the two-thirds Senate majority needed to convict him, unless more riots changed the equation.
"Should there be escalating violence through the looming inauguration of Joe Biden as 46th president of the United States, it is possible that enough senators might join Democrats and Independents to reach the 67 vote target," Ortel said.
However, if the Democrats and their mainstream Republican allies pressed ahead with impeachment even after Biden took office, this would certainly backfire and only serve to strengthen US nationalism, Ortel warned.
"In the heat of the present, Democrats and establishment Republicans may believe they are close to dancing on political graves of Trumpists. In reality, they are likely ensuring stronger support for respectful nationalism, and rejection of unregulated globalism," he predicted.
On Tuesday, Trump told reporters that the speech he delivered on January 6 before the protesters stormed Capitol Hill was "totally appropriate." He said the impeachment process was the "continuation of the greatest witch hunt in the history of politics."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Capital to Close 13 Stations Days Before Biden's Inauguration - Statement

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - Washington, DC metro authorities decided to close 13 stations several days before President-elect Joseph Biden inauguration, the transportation administration said in a statement.
The closures will continue from January 15 to January 21, and trains will work on a special schedule, it noted.
In addition, 26 bus routes will be detoured around the expanded security perimeter, the statement added.
Biden's inauguration will take place on January 20.
At least 5 people died in the January 6 storming of the US Capitol by angry mobs backing claims by outgoing President Donald Trump that massive electoral fraud robbed him of re-election.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Trump Urges Citizens to Ease Tensions Amid Reports About More Planned Demonstrations

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - President Donald Trump in a speech urged the US public to ease tensions amid reports that additional demonstrations may take place across the United States.
"I am asking everyone who has ever believed in our agenda to be thinking of ways to ease tensions, calm tempers and help to promote peace in our country," Trump said on Wednesday. "There has been reporting that additional demonstrations are being planned in the coming days, both here in Washington and across the country. I have been briefed by the US Secret Service on the potential threats. Every American deserves to have their voice heard in a respectful and peaceful way. That is your First Amendment right."
Trump said he condemns last week's riot at the US Capitol, adding that such actions have no place in the United States.
In the speech, Trump did not talk about the US House impeaching him earlier in the day.
Trump also said no true supporter of his should ever endorse political violence, disrespect law enforcement or the US flag, or harass other Americans.
Moreover, Trump said big tech's efforts to censor, cancel and blacklist Americans is "wrong and dangerous."
On June 6, a group of Trump supporters stormed the US Capitol and clashed with police. The incident came after the US president urged his supporters at a rally earlier to protest lawmakers certifying elector slates from battleground states that Trump and his supporters maintain are invalid. Five people died in the incident, including a police officer and an Air Force veteran and Trump supporter who was shot by police.
Trump told reporters on Tuesday that the speech he delivered on January 6 before his supporters was "totally appropriate." Trump also said the US House impeachment process by Democrats was a continuation of the greatest witch hunt in the history of politics in the United States.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Senate Panel to Hold Hearing Friday on Biden Nominee for National Intelligence Director
WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US Senate Intelligence Committee on Friday will hold a virtual confirmation hearing on President-elect Joe Biden's nomination of Avril Haines to serve as the Director of National Intelligence.
The Senate Intelligence Committee said the hearing will be in an open format and will begin at 12:00 p.m.
If confirmed, Haines will succeed John Ratcliffe, who was nominated to the position last year by outgoing President Donald Trump.

Haines has previously served as a Deputy National Security Adviser under to former US President Barack Obama in the period 2015-2017.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Trump Urges Citizens to Ease Tensions Amid Reports About More Planned Demonstrations

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US President Donald Trump in a speech urged the US public to ease tensions amid reports that additional demonstrations may take place across the United States.
"I am asking everyone who has ever believed in our agenda to be thinking of ways to ease tensions, calm tempers and help to promote peace in our country," Trump said on Wednesday. "There has been reporting that additional demonstrations are being planned in the coming days, both here in Washington and across the country. I have been briefed by the US Secret Service on the potential threats. Every American deserves to have their voice heard in a respectful and peaceful way. That is your First Amendment right."
Trump said he condemns last week's riot at the US Capitol, adding that such actions have no place in the United States.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Air Canada Slashes 1,700 Jobs Following Ottawa's Changes to Travel Entry Requirements

TORONTO, January 13 (Sputnik) - Air Canada is reducing its staff capacity by 1,700 positions after the government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau tweaked entry requirements mandating negative coronavirus tests to board an inbound flight, the company said in a statement.
The company will remove 25 percent of flights from its schedule for the first quarter of 2021 - an 80 percent reduction year over year - after the federal government announced that all incoming airline passengers must present a negative coronavirus test result administered no later than 72 hours prior to takeoff in order to be allowed to board the plane.
"Air Canada will be reducing approximately 25 per cent of its planned capacity for the balance of the first quarter of 2021," Air Canada said on Wednesday. "As a result of these system-wide changes, there will be a workforce reduction of approximately 1700 employees."
Staffing capacity at Air Canada's Express brand will be reduced by 200, the company added.
In a statement, Air Canada's Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer Lucie Guillemette said that the company looks forward to bringing back the 20,000 employees currently furloughed or laid off once business returns to normal.
National Airlines Council of Canada President Mike McNaney has said that the new directive has the industry flying blind, without guidance or information needed to implement an overly complex policy.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Schumer Says if Trump Convicted Senate to Hold Vote to Bar Him From Running Again

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US Senate will hold a vote to bar US President Donald Trump from running for the White House in the future if he is convicted of impeachment charges, presumptive Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said in a statement.
The US House of Representatives on Wednesday impeached President Donald Trump for "incitement" of last week's deadly riot at the Capitol.
"There will be an impeachment trial in the United States Senate, there will be a vote on convicting the president for high crimes and misdemeanors, and if the president convicted, there will be a vote on barring him from running again," Schumer, the chamber's top Democrat, said Wednesday.
A Senate trial can begin immediately if the current Senate Republican Majority leader Mitch McConnell will agree to reconvene it for an emergency session, Schumer added. Otherwise, Senate may start the process after January 19, he said.
"Now that the House of Representatives has acted, the Senate will hold a fair trial on the impeachment of Donald Trump for his role in inciting the violent insurrection at the US Capitol on January 6 and attempting to overturn a free and fair election," Schumer said.
In December 2019, Trump was impeached by the House of Representatives on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress charges in connection with his alleged attempt to force Ukraine into probing Biden's son. But the Senate, where the Republican Party enjoyed a majority, acquitted him in February 2020.
At least five people died in connection with the riots that erupted on January 6 after thousands stormed the Capitol including some wielding weapons inside the halls of Congress. The assault came after Trump urged followers to keep fighting and not allow the election to be "stolen."
Trump's allegations of vote fraud have been refuted by US election security and Justice Department officials.
On Tuesday, Trump told reporters that the speech he delivered on January 6 before the protesters stormed Capitol Hill was "totally appropriate." He said the impeachment process was the "continuation of the greatest witch hunt in the history of politics."
Trump says he condemns Capitol violence seen last week, it has no place in country
Sputnik

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Boeing Halts All Contributions to Political Candidates Following US Capito Riot

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - Boeing said in a press release that it has halted all donations from the company's political action committees to candidates for public office following last week's riot on Capitol Hill by supporters of President Donald Trump.
"Boeing strongly condemns the violence, lawlessness and destruction that took place in the US Capitol on January 6, 2021. Given the current environment, we are not making political contributions at this time," the release said on Wednesday.
The release indicated that Boeing would likely resume political donations at some point in the future after evaluating contributions "to ensure that we support those who not only support our company, but also uphold our country's most fundamental principles."
On January 6, a group of Trump supporters stormed the US Capitol to protest legislators confirming electoral slates from battleground US states they thought were invalid. Trump had made a speech among thousands of supporters earlier that day reiterated his claim a massive voter fraud had robbed his election victory and encouraged supporters to maintain support to "stop the steal."
Five people died in the riot, including one police officer and one Air Force veteran and Trump supporter who was shot dead by police.
The US House of Representatives impeached Trump earlier on Wednesday for inciting the riot.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

McConnell Says 'No Chance' of Fair Trump Impeachment Trial Before Inauguration

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell in a statement dismissed the possibility of a fair impeachment trial of President Donald Trump concluding before President-elect Joe Biden is sworn in on January 20.
"Given the rules, procedures, and Senate precedents that govern presidential impeachment trials, there is simply no chance that a fair or serious trial could conclude before President-elect Biden is sworn in next week," McConnell said on Wednesday.
Earlier in the day, the US House of Representatives voted to Trump for "incitement" of last week's deadly Capitol riot, sending the measure to the Senate for a full trial.
McConnell said each of the previous impeachment trials have lasted at least 21 days.
The Republican Senate leader added that the next week would be best reserved for ensuring an orderly transition of power to the incoming Biden Administration.
Biden will be sworn in as the nation's 46th president on January 20.
This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

FBI, Secret Service Brief Biden on Inauguration Security Plans - Statement

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - FBI officials and the US Secret Service have briefed President-elect Joe Biden on security precautions surrounding his inauguration and will also provide daily updates, the Biden-Harris transition team announced in a statement.
"Today, President-elect Biden received a briefing from senior officials at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Secret Service, and key members of his national security team," the statement said on Wednesday. "President-elect Biden's team will be receiving daily briefings on the security and operational preparations to ensure the transition unfolds smoothly."
The Biden-Harris transition team is currently cooperating with the outgoing Trump administration to ensure a smooth and secure transfer of power, the statement said.
"The team is engaging with the current administration to gain as much information as possible on the threat picture, and on the preparations being put in place to deter and defend against violent disruptions or attacks," the statement added.
The incoming team is also focused on laying the groundwork for a smooth presidential transition that will ensure a continuous command and control across the homeland security and law enforcement components of the US government, according to the statement.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

YouTube Has Removed Thousands of 'Violative' Videos, Including Trump's - CEO

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - Youtube has been removing thousands of videos that violated its policy content, including those posted by President Donald Trump, Sundar Pichai, chief executive of YouTube parent company Alphabet, said in an interview.
"We've been removing, you know, thousands of videos including videos from President Trump's channel, if we found them to be violative," Pichai said at a Reuters Next conference on Wednesday. "We have consistent policies on content moderation which, obviously, is about identifying content that scale and removing it before people can see it."
A pro-Trump mob stormed the Capitol on January 6 to try and prevent Congress from certifying the electoral victory of Democrat Joe Biden. Five people, including a policeman on duty and a female air force veteran who supported Trump, died in the raid on the US legislative assembly building that occurred after the president addressed a rally of his supporters in the vicinity, urging them to "show strength."
Both Trump and his supporters posted videos before and after the attack on the Capitol, and the president has been accused since of incitement - a charge he denies.
Pichai said Youtube had a policy to reduce the spread of unsettling content. "We don't recommend or promote content which we think is violative. There's definitely more to do."
Trump's term as president ends on January 20, with the inauguration of Biden. Congress began on Wednesday impeachment proceedings against Trump for the attack on the Capitol, subjecting him for a second time to such a process after initially impeaching him in 2019 for inviting foreign interference in a US election.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US House Impeaches Trump for 'Incitement of Insurrection' After Capitol Riot

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives on Wednesday impeached President Donald Trump for "incitement" of last week's deadly riot at the Capitol.
The US House voted 232-197 in favor of the resolution accusing Trump of "high Crimes and Misdemeanors by inciting violence against the Government of the United States." Trump is the first US president to be impeached twice.
Ten Republican lawmakers voted to impeach Trump.
The article of impeachment will be sent to the Senate for an impeachment trial. However, impeachment proceedings will take place once Trump leaves office. Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell declined to immediately reconvene the upper chamber under emergency authorities to begin the impeachment trial.
McConnell said he has not yet decided whether he will vote to impeach Trump.
If the impeachment is successful, Trump will be barred from holding public office ever again, including running for president in 2024.
In December 2019, Trump was impeached by the House of Representatives on the abuse of power and obstruction of Congress charges - over alleged attempts to force Ukraine into probing Biden's son. But the Senate, where the Republican Party enjoyed a majority, acquitted him in February 2020.
At least five people died in connection with the riots that erupted on January 6 after thousands stormed the Capitol including some wielding weapons inside the halls of Congress. The assault came after Trump urged followers to keep fighting and not allow the election to be "stolen."
Trump's allegations of vote fraud have been refuted by US election security and Justice Department officials.
On Tuesday, Trump told reporters that the speech he delivered on January 6 before the protesters stormed Capitol Hill was "totally appropriate." He said the impeachment process was the "continuation of the greatest witch hunt in the history of politics."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

McConnell Says 'No Chance' of Fair Trump Impeachment Trial Before Inauguration
WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell dismissed the possibility that a fair impeachment trial of President Donald Trump can conclude before President-elect Joe Biden is sworn in on January 20.
"Given the rules, procedures and Senate precedents that govern presidential impeachment trials, there is simply no chance that a fair or serious trial could conclude before President-elect Biden is sworn in next week," McConnell said on Wednesday.

Earlier in the day, the US House of Representatives voted to impeach Trump for inciting last week's riot at the Capitol and sent the measure to the Senate for a full trial.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Texas Charges Woman for Pressuring Residents to Change Vote - State Attorney General

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - A Texas woman has been charged with vote harvesting and fraud after a journalistic investigation revealed that she pressured electors to change their ballot choices, state Attorney General Ken Paxton said in a press release.
In October, a Project Veritas investigation showed that Rachel Rodriguez, political consultant for US House candidate Mauro Garza, coerced a voter into switching her vote for Democratic Senate candidate MJ Hegar from incumbent Republican John Cornyn.
"Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton today announced the arrest of Rachel Rodriguez for election fraud, illegal voting, unlawfully assisting people voting by mail, and unlawfully possessing an official ballot," the release said on Wednesday.
Rodriguez admitted on tape that her actions are illegal and could carry a 20-year prison sentence, a potential prison term confirmed in the press release.
Voter fraud become a focal point of the 2020 US presidential election, with sitting President Trump having claimed that widespread voter fraud and acts of impropriety robbed him of election victory.
Nevertheless, Paxton said in a statement that claims of an election devoid of voter fraud are "false and misleading," adding that the announced charges are further evidence to the contrary and a "victory for election integrity."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

232 US Congressmen, Including 10 Republicans Vote to Impeach Trump - Final Count

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - A total of 232 US Congressmen, including ten Republicans, voted in favor of impeaching President Donald Trump for inciting last week's riot at the Capitol.
The final vote count on Wednesday evening was 232-197 and marks the most votes cast in favor for impeaching a president in US history. Trump is the first US president to be impeached twice.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Bans All Imports of Cotton, Tomatoes From China's Xinjiang

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US government banned all imports of cotton and tomato products from China's Xinjiang province, a region where reports claim more than 1 million Muslims reportedly languish in Chinese camps, Customs and Border Protection said in a press release.
"Effective January 13 at all US ports of entry, US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will detain cotton products and tomato products produced in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region," the release said on Wednesday.
The CBP said it issued a region-wide Withhold Release Order (WRO) on products made by what it calls is slave labor in Xinjiang. The products include apparel, textiles, tomato seeds, canned tomatoes, tomato sauce, and other goods made with cotton and tomatoes.
Wednesday's action marked the fourth WRO issued against China since October 1, 2020.
The Chinese government continues to execute a campaign of repression targeting the mainly Muslim Uyghur people and other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang, the release said.
Up to 1 million residents of the province have been jailed in so-called re-education camps, according to US officials, the release added.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Selects Redstone Arsenal in State of Alabama as Space Force Headquarters - Air Force

WASHINGTON, September 13 (Sputnik) - The US Air Force named Redstone Arsenal as headquarters for the US Space Force, citing the high-tech workforce, schools and infrastructure in the host city of Huntsville, according to a press release.
"The Department of the Air Force conducted both virtual and on-site visits to assess which of six candidate locations would be best suited to host the US Space Command Headquarters based on factors related to mission, infrastructure capacity, community support and costs to the Department of Defense," the release said Wednesday.
Huntsville, sometimes called "Rocket City," is the longtime host of s NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center as well as the Army's Redstone Arsenal, which hosts the Army's Aviation and Missile Command as well as the US Missile Defense Agency.
Redstone sweetened its pitch in competition with five other candidate location while offering the facility to the Space Force at no cost while a permanent facility is being constructed, the release said.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

FBI, Secret Service Brief Biden on Inauguration Security Plans - Statement

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - FBI officials and the US Secret Service have briefed President-elect Joe Biden on security precautions surrounding inauguration and will also provide daily updates, the Biden-Harris Transition team announced in a statement .
"Today, President-elect Biden received a briefing from senior officials at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Secret Service, and key members of his national security team," the statement said on Wednesday. "President-elect Biden's team will be receiving daily briefings on the security and operational preparations to ensure the transition unfolds smoothly."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

RPT - US House Impeaches Trump for 'Incitement of Insurrection' After Capitol Riot

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives on Wednesday impeached President Donald Trump for "incitement" of last week's deadly riot at the Capitol. With voting still underway, a majority of the US House has already voted in favor of the resolution accusing Trump of "high Crimes and Misdemeanors by inciting violence against the Government of the United States." Trump is the first US president to be impeached twice.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US House Impeaches Trump for 'Incitement of Insurrection' After Capitol Riot

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives on Wednesday impeached President Donald Trump for "incitement" of last week's deadly riot at the Capitol. The House voted xx-xx in favor of the resolution accusing Trump of "high Crimes and Misdemeanors by inciting violence against the Government of the United States," sending the article of impeachment to the Senate to begin a trial. Trump is the first US president to be impeached twice.
This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Eight US House Republicans Say Will Vote to Impeach Trump

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) – US Congressmen Peter Meijer and Anthony Gonzolez announced on Wednesday that they would vote in favor of impeaching President Donald Trump, joining at least six other Republican members to make this commitment.

"Today, my job is to apply my best judgement to the article of impeachment that is on the floor of the US Congress. With the facts at hand, I believe the article of impeachment to be accurate The President betrayed his other of office by seeking to undermine our constitutional process, and he bears responsibility for inciting the violent acts of insurrection last week. With a heavy heart, I will vote to impeach President Donald J. Trump," Meijer said in a statement posted to Twitter.
Gonzales, in a separate statement, said he was likewise "compelled to support impeachment." Six other Republicans – Dan Newhouse, Liz Cheney, John Katko, Adam Kinzinger, Fred Upton and Herrera Beutler – have also pledged to vote in favor of impeaching the sitting US president. No House Republicans voted in favor of the articles of impeachment brought forward against Trump last year.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

SPUTNIK TOP STORIES OF THE DAY
WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) -

SECURITY MEASURES IN WASHINGTON, DC
* Hundreds of armed National Guard troops have been deployed to secure the US Capitol as the impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump commenced on Wednesday.
* More than 20,000 National Guard troops will be on hand to help secure the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden next week, acting Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department Robert Contee said.
* Trump issued a statement calling on his supporters to refrain from violence and property destruction amid calls for demonstrations against the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden.

TRUMP IMPEACHMENT
* US Congressman Dan Newhouse told the House of Representatives on Wednesday that he would vote in favor of impeaching President Donald Trump, the sixth Republican to make such a commitment.
* US House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy said that Trump is responsible for inciting the riot at the US Capitol last week, but he should not be impeached in such a short time frame.
* US Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell will not reconvene the upper chamber before its current recess ends on January 19 to consider legislation to impeach Trump, his press secretary confirmed.

PUTIN-ERDOGAN TALKS
* Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, discussed the creation of the bilateral center for controlling the implementation of the ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Kremlin said on Wednesday.

* Putin and Erdogan discussed, in their phone conversation, the continuing fight against the coronavirus pandemic, including plans related to joint vaccine production and use, the Kremlin said.
* Putin held a phone conversation with his Turkish counterpart, Erdogan, to brief the latter on the key results of the latest Karabakh talks of Russian, Azeri and Armenian leaders, which Moscow hosted on Monday, the Kremlin said.

COVID-19
* Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga declared on Wednesday a state of emergency in seven more prefectures, expanding the measure beyond Tokyo (where state of emergency was introduced last week), amid a surge in coronavirus infections, Kyodo news agency reported.
* The Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) and Brazilian pharmaceutical company Uniao Quimica announced the start of vaccination of the Brazilian population with Russian coronavirus vaccine Sputnik V, according to the vaccine's Twitter account.

RUSSIAN NATIONALS DETAINED IN SOUTH SUDAN
* Russian blogger Ilya Varlamov, his wife Lyubov, activist Pyotr Verzilov and two other Russians were detained in the town of Kapoeta in South Sudan, the blogger's website said Wednesday.
* Several Russian nationals were released after being detained in South Sudan earlier in the day, spokeswoman for the Russian Foreign Ministry Maria Zakharova said.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US House Begins Vote on Impeaching Trump on Charges of Inciting Insurrection at Capitol

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives began voting on Wednesday to impeach President Donald Trump on charges of inciting the riot at the Capitol building.
If the House adopts the article of impeachment, Trump will be the first US president to be impeached twice.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Domestic Terrorists Planning Inauguration Day Riots in New York - State Attorney General

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US state of New York is bracing for potential Inauguration Day riots targeting with threats to prosecute anyone who participates including potential domestic terrorists, state Attorney General Letitia James said in a press release on Wednesday.

"Insurrectionists and domestic terrorists are considering riots at the New York state Capitol in Albany and at state Capitols across the nation between now and next Wednesday," James said. James said her office is working with law enforcement on the ground to ensure the chaos in Washington does not take place in New York.
"We will not hesitate to take legal action against anyone who seeks to terrorize or harm legislators, Capitol staff, law enforcement, or members of the public," James added.
The FBI warned earlier this week that right-wing extremists and others were planning armed protests in all 50 states.
At least 5 people died in the January 6 storming of the US Capitol by angry mobs backing claims by outgoing President Donald Trump that massive electoral fraud robbed him of re-election.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Senate Republican Leader McConnell Says Undecided on How to Vote on Trump Impeachment

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell in a statement released by his spokesperson on Wednesday said he has not yet made a final decision on how he will vote in the forthcoming impeachment trial for President Donald Trump.
"While the press has been full of speculation, I have not made a final decision on how I will vote and I intend to listen to the legal arguments when they are presented to the Senate," McConnell said in the statement.
The US House later on Wednesday is expected to vote to impeach Trump for "incitement" of last week's deadly Capitol riot, sending the measure to the Senate for a full trial.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Airstrike Kills 1 Terrorist, Destroys Compound in Somalia - Africa Command

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - A US airstrike on a terrorist outpost in Somalia killed one al-Shabab fighter and destroyed a compound near the town of Buulo Fulaay, Africa Command (AFRICOM) said on Wednesday.
"In coordination with the Federal Government of Somalia, US Africa Command forces conducted one airstrike in the vicinity of Buulo Fulaay, Somalia Jan. 13, 2021," the command said in a statement. "Initial assessments indicate the strike killed one al-Shabaab personnel and destroyed one compound."
Initial assessments indicate the strike killed one al-Shabab personnel and destroyed one compound, the release said.

Future involvement of the US military in Somalia remains uncertain with the incoming administration of President-elect Joe Biden following President Donald Trump's order in early December for the withdrawal of nearly all American forces from the East African nation.
The Defense Department has said some of the troops may be assigned to other areas outside of the region.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Charges 7 More People With Crimes Committed During Capitol Hill Riots - Justice Dept.

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US government charged another seven people in federal court in connection with crimes committed during Capitol Hill riots in Washington, DC last week, the Department of Justice said on Wednesday.
"Seven individuals have been charged in federal court in the District of Columbia in connection with crimes committed at the US Capitol in Washington, DC, on Wednesday, January 6, 2021," the statement read.
All defendants were arrested in the last two days in different parts of the country, including Virginia, New York, Florida, Idaho, Wisconsin, and in Washington, DC. They were charged with entering restricted space, intent to impede government business, engaging in disorderly conduct on Capitol grounds, and other counts. Another three defendants previously charged by criminal complaint have been indicted in federal court.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Deficit Already at Record of Nearly $573Bln - Treasury

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US budget deficit rose 61 percent in the first three months of fiscal 2021 to a record $572.9 billion, the Treasury Department said in its monthly balance sheet released on Wednesday.
Outlays for October, when the 2021 federal government fiscal year started, to December amounted to $1.376 trillion while receipts totaled $803.37 billion, resulting in the $572.899 billion deficit, according to the balance sheet.
In the last fiscal year, Treasury reported a budget deficit of $3.13 trillion.
The budget shortfall came after the issuance of roughly $3 trillion of aid by Congress under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act to provide grants and loans to US businesses as well as relief to individuals amid the coronavirus pandemic.
The 2021 deficit could grow far beyond last year's shortfall with the incoming Biden administration promising to issue "trillions of dollars" more in stimulus this year to battle the protracted pandemic.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Police Push Anti-Trump Protesters Away From Capitol Building

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - Police pushed away from the Capitol building a group of anti-Trump protesters who demanded the expulsion of lawmakers allied to US President Donald Trump, a Sputnik correspondent reported on Wednesday.
The incidents occurred amid ongoing impeachment proceedings in Congress. Trump is expected to be impeached today by the Democratic-controlled House for inciting riots on Capitol Hill last week.
The activists left after the police threatened to arrest them in three official warnings.
The protesters wanted to hang banners on the fence surrounding the capitol with the names of 121 members of congress and 12 senators whom they accuse of supporting the outgoing president.
Extra layers of defense have been hastily erected around the US Capitol. In addition to the handguns, the police on the grounds are armed with shotguns and assault rifles.
More than 20,000 soldiers from the US National Guard will be on hand to help secure the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden next week.
The enhanced security comes a week after thousands of Trump supporters stormed Capitol Hill in a bid to prevent Congress from certifying Biden's victory, marking the most significant breach of the grounds since the British set fire to it in 1814.
On Monday, Trump declared a state of emergency in Washington ahead of Biden's inauguration planned for January 20, after the FBI warned that armed protests were being planned in all 50 US states.
At least five people died in connection with the riots that erupted on January 6 after thousands stormed the Capitol including some wielding weapons inside the halls of Congress. The assault came after Trump urged followers to keep fighting and not allow the election to be "stolen."
Trump's allegations of vote fraud have been refuted by US election security and Justice Department officials.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Trump 'Bears Responsibility' for US Capitol Riot But Should Not Be Impeached - McCarthy

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US House of Representatives Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy said on Wednesday that President Donald Trump is responsible for inciting the riot at the US Capitol last week, but he should not be impeached in such a short time frame.
"I believe impeaching the president in such a short time frame would be a mistake... that doesn't mean the president is free from fault. The president bears responsibility for Wednesday's attack on Congress by mob rioters," McCarthy said on the House floor.

The House of Representatives is currently debating a resolution to impeach Trump and a final vote on the measure is expected Wednesday afternoon.
McCarthy said an impeachment would further divide the US public and flame further violence.
Earlier in the day, Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell's press secretary said he would not reconvene the chamber before its current recess ends on January 19 to consider legislation to impeach Trump.
The House resolution charges Trump with inciting an insurrection on January 6, when his loyalists stormed the US Capitol building after he urged them to protest against the certification of Electoral College votes by Congress. Five people including a police officer were killed as a result of the riot.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Google Pauses All Political Ads in Wake of Attack on US Capitol

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - Google suspended all political advertising after last week's attack on the US Capitol to avoid the incitement of more violence, a spokesperson told Sputnik in a statement on Wednesday.
The US House is expected to impeach President Donald Trump later in the day for inciting his supporters to storm Capitol Hill to prevent Congress from certifying the presidential election.
"Given the events of the past week, we will expand our Sensitive Event policy enforcement to temporarily pause all political ads in addition to any ads referencing impeachment, the inauguration, or protests at the US Capitol," the spokesperson said. "We have long-standing policies blocking content that incites violence or promotes hate and we will be extremely vigilant about enforcing on any ads that cross this line."
The spokesperson also said that Google "regularly pause ads over unpredictable, 'sensitive' events when ads can be used to exploit the event or amplify misleading information."
In a separate statement to advertisers, Google said it was planning to keep the policy in place until at least January 21 - a day after the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden.
Google's decision to pause all political advertising came two days after most American companies suspended all political donations in the aftermath of the attack on the Capitol.
Five people, including a policeman on duty and a female air force veteran who supported Trump, died in the January 6 attack. Social media companies Twitter, Facebook and Google's YouTube have all suspended Trump from their platforms. The president, who leaves office in exactly a week, faced a second impeachment in Congress on Wednesday for inciting the riot, after his first impeachment in 2019 for inviting foreign interference in US elections. Trump has denied the charges.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Trump in White House Statement Urges 'No Violence' Amid Calls for Fresh Protests

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US President Donald Trump in a statement released by the White House on Wednesday called on his supporters to refrain from participating in violent riots amid fresh calls for demonstrations against President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration.
On Monday, Trump declared a state of emergency in Washington, DC ahead of Biden's inauguration, planned for January 20, after the FBI warned that armed protests might occur in the US capital and state capitals.
"In light of reports of more demonstrations, I urge that there must be no violence, no lawbreaking and no vandalism of any kind," Trump said in the statement. "That is not what I stand for and it is not what America stands for. I call on all Americans to help ease tensions and calm tempers."
Trump's statement comes as US lawmakers debate an article of impeachment against the president for "incitement of insurrection" in last week's unrest on Capitol Hill.
However, Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell confirmed he will not reconvene the chamber to consider impeaching the president before his term is over on January 20.
On January 6, a group of Trump supporters stormed the US Capitol building after he urged them to protest against the certification of electoral slates by lawmakers, in the belief that those slates from battleground US states were invalid. Five people, including a police officer, died during the unrest.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Over 10Mln Americans Vaccinated for COVID-19 in Latest Official Count - Health Dept.

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The first of the two-dose coronavirus vaccines have been administered to 10.3 million people in the United States, about one third of the total made available thus far, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported on its COVID-19 Data Tracker website on Wednesday.
The site tallied 29,380,125 doses distributed to US states and territories thus far with shots given to 10,278,462 thus far, the CDC said.
The vaccine effort lags behind predictions by the Trump administration in November 2020 that 20 million people would receive inoculations in December followed by 25-to-30 million each month thereafter.
Two vaccines approved by the US authorities thus far - by Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna - require a second dose several weeks later to achieve a 95 percent immunity claimed by both vaccine makers
The slow rollout prompted the United States this week to expand eligibility from an initial cadre of nursing home residents and healthcare workers to everyone age 65 and over in an attempt to speed things up.
President-elect Joe Biden has pledged to vaccinate a million people daily during his first 100 days in office.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

UK Awards 12-Year, $273Mln Contract to Train Sailors Using New Technology - Raytheon

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The UK Royal Navy will receive training to use new technology introduced during the next 12 years under a $273 million contract announced by Raytheon in a press release on Wednesday.
"The contract, which will be led by Capita, has an initial contract value of [$273 million] to Raytheon UK and will ensure the Royal Navy offers best-in-class training to all its service personnel. It will accelerate the use of new technology, processes and learning solutions, aligning with the Royal Navy's transformation agenda and positioning it to thrive in the 21st century," the release said.
The UK firm Capita is part of a multi-company consortium led by Raytheon's UK subsidiary, which also includes Elbit Systems UK and Fujitsu, according to media reports.
Raytheon UK employs about 1,700 Britons as a prime contractor and major supplier for the nation's defense ministry, the release said.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Trump in White House Statement Urges 'No Violence' Amid Calls for Fresh Protests

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US President Donald Trump in a statement released by the White House on Wednesday called on his supporters to refrain from participating in violent riots amid fresh calls for demonstrations against President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration.
On Monday, Trump declared a state of emergency in Washington, DC ahead of Biden's inauguration, planned for January 20, after the FBI warned that armed protests might occur in the US capital and state capitals.
"In light of reports of more demonstrations, I urge that there must be no violence, no lawbreaking and no vandalism of any kind," Trump said in the statement. "That is not what I stand for and it is not what America stands for. I call on all Americans to help ease tensions and calm tempers."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Sixth US House Republican Says Will Vote to Impeach Trump

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) – US Congressman Dan Newhouse told the House of Representatives on Wednesday that he would vote in favor of impeaching President Donald Trump, becoming the sixth Republican member to make this commitment.
"A vote against this impeachment is a vote to validate the unacceptable violence we witnessed in our nation's capital. It is also a vote to condone President Trump's inaction … I will vote yes on the articles of impeachment," Newhouse said as the House debated an impeachment resolution.
Five other Republicans - Liz Cheney, John Katko, Adam Kinzinger, Fred Upton and Herrera Beutler – have also pledged to vote in favor of impeaching the sitting US president.
No House Republicans voted in favor of the articles of impeachment brought forward against Trump last year.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Ukraine Becomes First Country to Pay 2021 UN Budget Dues in Full - Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, January 13 (Sputnik) - Ukraine is the first United Nations member state that paid in 2021 its annual dues to the organization's budget in full, UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said in a press briefing on Wednesday.
"Ukraine has officially become the first member state to pay its dues in full for 2021," Dujarric said.
According to the United Nations, Ukraine paid nearly $1.65 million on Tuesday toward its regular budget assessment.
As of December 30, only 144 UN member states out of 193 have paid their dues in full for 2020.
This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Trump 'Bears Responsibility' for US Capitol Riot But Should Not Be Impeached - McCarthy

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US House of Representatives Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy said on Wednesday that President Donald Trump is responsible for inciting the riot at the US Capitol last week, but he should not be impeached in such a short time frame.
"I believe impeaching the president in such a short time frame would be a mistake... that doesn't mean the president is free from fault. The president bears responsibility for Wednesday's attack on Congress by mob rioters," McCarthy said.
The House of Representatives is currently debating a resolution to impeach Trump and a final vote on the measure is expected Wednesday afternoon.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US, Bahrain Sign Memorandum to Establish Trade Zone - Commerce Dept.

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The United States and Bahrain signed an agreement allowing Washington to establish a trade zone in the Persian Gulf kingdom, the Commerce Department said on Wednesday.
"Yesterday, the US Department of Commerce and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism of the Kingdom of Bahrain signed... a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to Enhance US-Bahrain Trade through the Establishment of a US Trade Zone (USTZ) in the Kingdom of Bahrain," the department said in a statement.
The USTZ will allow US businesses multimodal access to the region, including port, airport or any future customs posts created by the Kingdom of Bahrain, the statement said.
The new trade zone will foster economic engagement and industrial cooperation while boosting bilateral trade, the release added.
Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross in the release said Bahrain as a strategic US partner helps maintain stability and ensure the free flow of commerce in the Gulf.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

UN Chief Saddened by Deaths of 2 Malawian Ministers From COVID-19 - Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, January 13 (Sputnik) - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is saddened to learn the news of the passing of two Malawian ministers from COVID-19, UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said in a press briefing on Wednesday.
"The Secretary-General has learned with great sadness of the untimely passing of the Minister of Transport and Public Works Sidik Mia, as well as the Minister of Local Governments and Rural Development Lingison Belekanyama," Dujarric said.
Guterres expressed condolences to the ministers' families as well as to all people who have succumbed to the disease in Malawi.
The East African nation has so far reported 9,400 coronavirus cases and 254 virus-related deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

RPT - US Senate Will Not Reconvene Early to Consider Impeaching Trump - Leader's Spokesman

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell will not reconvene the upper chamber before its current recess ends on January 19 to consider legislation to impeach President Donald Trump, his press secretary confirmed on Wednesday.

McConnell's press secretary Doug Andres in a statement on Twitter confirmed that the leader of the chamber will not consent to immediately reconvene under emergency authorities to consider legislation to impeach Trump.
The House of Representatives is currently debating a measure to impeach Trump for his "incitement" of last week's violence on Capitol Hill.
The House will hold a final vote on the measure Wednesday afternoon.
The resolution charges Trump with inciting an insurrection on January 6, when his loyalists stormed the US Capitol building after he urged them to protest against the certification of Electoral College votes by Congress. Five people including a police officer were killed as a result of the riot.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

U Senate Will Not Reconvene Early to Consider Impeaching Trump - Leader's Spokesman

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell will not reconvene the upper chamber before its current recess ends on January 19 to consider legislation to impeach President Donald Trump, his press secretary confirmed on Wednesday.
McConnell's press secretary Doug Andres in a statement on Twitter confirmed that the leader of the chamber will not consent to immediately reconvene under emergency authorities to consider legislation to impeach Trump.
The House of Representatives is currently debating a measure to impeach Trump for his "incitement" of last week's violence on Capitol Hill.
The House will hold a final vote on the measure Wednesday afternoon.
The resolution charges Trump with inciting an insurrection on January 6, when his loyalists stormed the US Capitol building after he urged them to protest against the certification of Electoral College votes by Congress. Five people including a police officer were killed as a result of the riot.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Senate Will Not Reconvene Early to Consider Impeaching Trump - Leader's Spokesman

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell will not reconvene the upper chamber before its current recess ends on January 19 to consider legislation to impeach President Donald Trump, his press secretary confirmed on Wednesday.
McConnell's press secretary Doug Andres in a statement on Twitter confirmed that the leader of the chamber will not consent to immediately reconvene under emergency authorities to consider legislation to impeach Trump.

The House of Representatives is currently debating a measure to impeach Trump for his "incitement" of last week's violence on Capitol Hill.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Attacks in CAR, Mali Kill 2 UN Peacekeepers Wednesday - Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, January 13 (Sputnik) - Two UN peacekeepers lost their lives and more were injured on Wednesday as the result of separate attacks that took place in the Central African Republic (CAR) and Mali, UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said in a press briefing.
"The Secretary-General [Antonio-Guterres] strongly condemns today's attacks by unidentified armed combatants on Central African national defense and security forces, and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) near Bangui. A peacekeeper from Rwanda was killed and another injured," Dujarric said."
Earlier in the day, CAR's Prime Minister Firmin Ngrebada said the government forces have repelled attacks by rebels on the capital of Bangui.
Guterres called on the CAR authorities to ensure accountability for the attacks and called on all parties to stop violence and engage in dialogue.
In another incident in the city of Timbuktu, one peacekeeper from the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) died and seven others were injured, following an attack against a UN convoy, Dujarric said.
MINUSMA had secured the area and launched an investigation into the incident with further details to follow, the spokesman added.
The CAR held the presidential and legislative elections on December 27. The week before the election was marked by violence between the forces backing incumbent President Faustin Archange Touadera and supporters of former President Francois Bozize. Touadera won a second term, but the outcome of the election still needs to be certified by the republic's Constitutional Court.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Designates Ex-Kataib Hizballah Secretary-General as Global Terrorist - State Dept.

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The United States has designated former Secretary-General of the Iranian-backed Kataib Hezbollah militia group as a global terrorist, a US State Department announced in a release on Wednesday.
"Today the United States is designating Abd al-Aziz Malluh Mirjirash al-Muhammadawi – also known as Abu Fadak - as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) pursuant to Executive

Order 13224," the release said. "Muhammadawi is the former Secretary-General of Kataib Hezbollah (KH), a US-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization and SDGT."
The State Department said Kataib Hezbollah wants to advance Iran's "malign agenda" in the region and is responsible for numerous terrorist attacks in Iraq.
" In addition, KH has reportedly been involved in recent and widespread theft of Iraqi state resources and the killing, abduction, and torture of peaceful protesters and activists in Iraq," the release said.
Muhammadawi is also working in conjunction with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps - Qods Force to reshape official Iraqi state security institutions, the release said.
"Iran-backed elements, including those in which Muhammadawi now plays a leadership role, have previously been involved in sectarian violence, including the abductions of hundreds of men from areas liberated from ISIS [Islamic State terror group, banned in Russia] control," the release said. "These individuals remain missing to this day.
Groups with which Muhammadawi is affiliated have established fictitious cover names to hide their culpability for ongoing attacks against Iraqi government facilities and foreign diplomatic facilities, the release added.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US House Speaker Pelosi Calls Trump 'Clear and Present Danger,' Says He Must Go

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in a speech on the chamber's floor on Wednesday said President Donald Trump is a danger to the United States and must be removed from office.
"We know that the president of the United States incited this insurrection... He must go," Pelosi said. "He is a clear and present danger to the nation that we all love."
The House is currently debating legislation to impeach Trump and will hold a final vote later today.
The resolution charges Trump with inciting an insurrection on January 6, when his loyalists stormed the US Capitol building after he urged them to protest against the certification of Electoral College votes by Congress. Five people including a police officer were killed as a result of the riot.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

New York City Mayor Renews Call for Ban of UK Flights Amid Spread of COVID-19 Variant

NEW YORK, January 13 (Sputnik) - New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio renewed his call on Wednesday for a ban on UK flights into the United States after more US states reported cases of the UK variant of the coronavirus.
"We need a travel ban immediately again," de Blasio told a live-streamed briefing. "There's federal action on ensuring that anyone who gets on a plane has a negative test. But in the case of the UK, that's literally not enough. We need those flights canceled and we need to [have a] travel ban until the situation is greatly improved."
De Blasio called for a UK travel ban last week after the first case of the coronavirus variant, known as B.1.1.7, surfaced in New York. Since then, the variant, more transmissible than the original COVID-19 and triggering new lockdowns in Europe, has been detected in at least 10 US states.
Besides the B.1.1.7, researchers in Ohio said they have discovered two other variants of the coronavirus that likely originated in the United States, and that one quickly became the dominant strain in Columbus, the state's capital, over a three-week period in late December and early January.
New York City, along with the state of New York, were the biggest COVID-19 hotspots at the height of the pandemic's breakout in the first half of 2020.
At the peak of the COVID-19 outbreak in April, New York state had about 18,000 people in hospitals and there were roughly 800 people dying a day from complications caused by the virus. On Tuesday, there were 8,926 COVID-related hospitalizations in the state and 164 deaths of those infected.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Authorities Deploy Armed National Guard Troops to Secure US Capitol

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - Hundreds of armed National Guard troops have been deployed to secure the US Capitol as the impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump commenced on Wednesday.
Some of the troops were seen standing guard behind a fence erected around the Capitol grounds as the Congress debates a motion to impeach President Donald Trump over what Democrats and some Republicans say was inciting an insurrection, a Sputnik correspondent reported.
Members of the National Guard have camped out in front of the US Capitol building ahead of the impeachment session and dozens can be seen sleeping on the floor in the Capitol building halls with their rifles next to them.
According to acting Chief of the Washington Metropolitan Police Department Robert Contee, more than 20,000 National Guard troops will be on hand to help secure the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden next week.
Earlier on Wednesday, the US House of Representatives convened a session to impeach Trump for a second time over inciting an insurrection following last week's riot at the Capitol.

The Democrat-majority House is expected to easily pass the resolution impeaching Trump for "high crimes and misdemeanors" over his role in the storming of the Capitol by a group of Trump supporters, making him the only president in US history to have been impeached twice. The House is now proceeding with one hour of debate on the rule governing impeachment debate, and will hold a vote on the rule afterward. Lawmakers will then proceed with two hours of debate on the impeachment resolution before holding a final vote.
On January 6, a group of Trump supporters stormed the US Capitol building after the president urged them to protest against the certification of electoral slates by Congress, some of which they believe are invalid. Five people, including a police officer, died in the riot.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US House Advances Trump Impeachment Bill, Paving Way for Vote Later Today

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives on Wednesday approved a rule to set two hours of debate on a resolution to impeach President Donald Trump over his "incitement" of last week's deadly riot at the Capitol.
The Democrat-majority House voted 221-203 in favor of the rule, largely along party lines, paving a way for a vote by the chamber later in the day on the impeachment resolution.
The resolution accuses Trump of "high Crimes and Misdemeanors by inciting violence against the Government of the United States." On January 6, Trump loyalists stormed the US Capitol building, after he urged them to protest against the certification of Electoral College votes by Congress. Five people including a police officer were killed as a result of the riot.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Over 20,000 National Guard Troops to Help Secure Biden Inauguration - DC Police Chief

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - More than 20,000 soldiers from the US National Guard will be on hand to help secure the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden next week, acting Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department Robert Contee said in a press briefing on Tuesday.
"With respect to the National Guard, those numbers, the final numbers - because this has been designated as a national special security event, the final numbers will be provided from the United States Secret Service," Contee told reporters. "I think you can expect to see somewhere upwards beyond 20,000 members of the National Guard that will be here in the footprint of the District of Columbia."
The enhanced security comes a week after thousands of Trump supporters stormed Capitol Hill in a bid to prevent Congress from certifying Biden's victory, marking the most significant breach of the grounds since the British set fire to it in 1814.

Following last week's unrest on Capitol Hill, authorities in the nation's capital have significantly tightened security ahead of the January 20 inauguration, ,including deploying more than 6,000 Natinoal Guard troops and imposing a six-day lockdown of the downtown Washington, DC area. On Monday, Trump declared a state of emergency in Washington ahead of Biden's inauguration planned for January 20, after the FBI warned that armed protests were being planned in all 50 US states.
The threat of violence illustrated by the Capitol takeover, in which some protesters brought weapons inside the halls of Congress and at least five people reportedly died.The assault came after Trump urged followers to keep fighting and not allow the election to be "stolen." Trump's allegations of vote fraud have been refuted by US election security and Justice Department officials.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Imposes New Iran-Related Sanctions on 3 Individuals, 16 Entities - Treasury

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The United States has imposed counter-terrorism sanctions through the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) on three individuals from Iran and Iraq and 16 Iranian entities, the US Department of the Treasury said in a statement on Wednesday.
The three individuals are Ahmad Marvi and Mohammad Mokhber, both from Iran, and Abd al-Aziz Malluh Mirjirash Al-Muhammadawi from Iraq, the statement said.
The entities that have been added to OFAC's list are Abadan Power Generation Company, Astan Quds Razavi, Barkat Ventures, Iran Combine Manufacturing Co., Iran Mobin Electronic Development Company, Mofidrahbar Audit Firm, Quds Razavi Housing and Construction Co., Quds Razavi Mines Co., Quds Razavi Traditional Tile Co., Razavi Brokerage Firm, Razavi Economic Organization, Razavi Information and Communication Technology Co., Razavi Oil and Gas Development Co., Razavi Khodro Co. and Tadbir Drilling Development Company.
The Treasury Department said Mohammad Mokhber is the leader of the Execution of Imam Khomeini's Order (EIKO), a purportedly charitable organization that controls large parts of Iran's economy, including assets from political dissidents and religious minorities, for the benefit of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and senior Iranian officials.
EIKO has a stake in almost every sector of the Iranian economy and carries out many investments through one of its main holding companies - the Tadbir Economic Development Group with numerous subsidiaries, including Tadbir Drilling and Development Company, the statement said.
Iran Mobin Electronic Development Company and Barkat Ventures are direct subsidiaries of EIKO and are involved in telecommunications and cyberspace and information technology, the statement said.
The Treasury Department also said another ostensibly charitable organization - Astan Quds Razavi (AQR) - has acquired vast economic holdings in constriction, agriculture, energy,

telecommunications and financial services. It is overseen by Ahmad Msrvi who is one of Supreme Leader Khamenei's closest associates.
AQR controls entities through Razavi Economic Organization and has a vast economic empire which includes Iran Combine Manufacturing Co, Quds Razavi Traditional Tile Co., Razavi Oil and Gas Development Co. among others, the statement said.
The targeted Razavi Information and Communication Technology Co. provides telecommunication and computer services to AQR and develops hardware and software, while Mofidrahbar Audit Firm, supervised by the Iranian Supreme Leader's Office, has been tasked with reviewing and auditing the performance of AQR's economic activities, the statement added.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Biden Adds 3 National Security Council Members to Upcoming Cabinet - Statement

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - US President-elect Joe Biden said in a statement on Wednesday three additional National Security Council (NSC) appointments to his administration, which takes office next week.
"These dedicated public servants will be integral in keeping the American people safe and building capacity to prepare for and respond to the full spectrum of threats we face - from cyber intrusions to grid attacks, from possible future pandemics to deliberate acts of terror," Biden said. "They will strengthen our resilience to natural disasters, and work with our allies and friends to ensure the cyber rules of the road are made by democracies."
The appointments include Anne Neuberger as Deputy National Security Advisor for Cyber and Emerging Technology, Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall as Homeland Security Advisor and Deputy National Security Advisor and Russ Travers as Deputy Homeland Security Advisor.
The role of the National Security Council has come under greater scrutiny over the past week after a riot took place at the US Capitol by supporters of incumbent president Donald Trump on January 6.
A score of senior advisers in Trump's National Security Council resigned following the unrest and Trump now faces a second impeachment by Congress. Biden is set to take office on January 20.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

More Than 20,000 National Guard Troops to Help Secure Biden Inauguration - DC Police Chief

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - More than 20,000 soldiers from the US National Guard will be on hand to help secure the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden next week, acting Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department Robert Contee said in a press briefing on Tuesday.

"With respect to the National Guard, those numbers, the final numbers - because this has been designated as a national special security event, the final numbers will be provided from the United States Secret Service," Contee told reporters. "I think you can expect to see somewhere upwards beyond 20,000 members of the National Guard that will be here in the footprint of the District of Columbia."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Awards $325Mln Contract to Service E-8C Targeting Radar System - Northrop Grumman

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US Air Force inked a $325 million contract to continue maintaining the Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (STARS) on the fleet of E-8C aircraft, Northrop Grumman said in a press release on Wednesday.
"The 2021 contract executes the Total System Support Responsibility (TSSR) program for the E-8C Joint STARS fleet with Northrop Grumman as the prime systems integrator for total support and sustainment to the US Air Force," the release said.
The $325 million contract will provide program management, engineering technical support, aircrew and maintenance training, supply chain and spares management, technical data and publications, program depot maintenance and overall customer support, the release said.
The STARS fleet provides real-time battle management with wide-area moving target detection that enables warfighters to locate, track and classify surface targets in all weather conditions and at standoff distances, the release added.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Airbnb Cancels Reservations for Biden Inauguration Due to Reports of Violent Hate Groups

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - Airbnb canceled reservations in the Washington, DC area for next week's inauguration in response to warnings that hate groups and armed militias plan to disrupt the swearing in of President-elect Joe Biden, the company said in a press release on Wednesday.
"We are aware of reports emerging yesterday afternoon regarding armed militias and known hate groups that are attempting to travel and disrupt the Inauguration," the release said.
The company also said it had begun banning from its website individuals identified by police and media in the group of Trump supporters who stormed and occupied the US Capitol building last week.
Airbnb blocked new reservations for next week's inauguration festivities, the release added.
The threat of violence illustrated by the Capitol takeover, in which some protesters brought weapons inside the halls of Congress and at least five people reportedly died, prompted

warnings from law enforcement of violent attacks by right-wing extremists who consider Biden to be a fraudulently elected president.
Prior to the Capitol Hill riot, police and political leaders in the region had urged people not to attend the inauguration due to the coronavirus pandemic.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Police Presence, Barriers Enhanced in US Capital as Trump Impeachment Session Opens

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - Enhanced security measures have been put in place in Washington, DC as the impeachment proceedings against US President Donald Trump begin on Wednesday.
The authorities have deployed additional law enforcement personnel throughout the city and numerous barriers have been erected to prevent a repeat of the unruly protests observed a week earlier, a Sputnik correspondent on the ground reported.
In addition to the concrete barrier placed in the core of the city's downtown area, massive "non-scalable" fences encircle office buildings near the White House and more are expected to be erected soon.
Meanwhile, members of the National Guard have camped out in the US Capitol building ahead of the impeachment session and dozens can be seen sleeping on the floor in the Capitol building halls.
Earlier on Wednesday, the US House of Representatives convened a session to impeach Trump for a second time over his "incitement of an insurrection" following last week's deadly riot at the Capitol.
The Democrat-majority House is expected to easily pass the resolution impeaching Trump for high crimes and misdemeanors, making him the only president in US history to have been impeached twice.
The House is now proceeding with a one hour of debate on the rule governing impeachment debate and will hold a vote on the rule afterward. Lawmakers will then proceed with two hours of debate on the impeachment resolution before holding a final vote.
On January 6, a group of Trump supporters stormed the US Capitol building after the president urged them to protest against the certification of Electoral College votes by Congress. Five people, including a police officer, died as a result of the riot.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Imposes New Iran-Related Sanctions on 3 Individuals, 16 Entities - Treasury

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The United States has imposed counter-terrorism sanctions through the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) on three individuals from Iran

and Iraq and 16 Iranian entities, the US Department of the Treasury said in a statement on Wednesday.
The three individuals are Ahmad Marvi and Mohammad Mokhber, both from Iran, and Abd al-Aziz Malluh Mirjirash Al-Muhammadawi from Iraq, the statement said.
The entities that have been added to OFAC's list are Abadan Power Generation Company, Aslan Quds Razavi, Barkat Ventures, Iran Combine Manufacturing Co., Iran Mobin Electronic Development Company, Mofidrahbar Audit Firm, Quds Razavi Housing and Construction Co., Quds Razavi Mines Co., Quds Razavi Traditional Tile Co., Razavi Brokerage Firm, Razavi Economic Organization, Razavi Information and Communication Technology Co., Razavi Oil and Gas Development Co., Razavi Khodro Co. and Tadbir Drilling Development Company.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US House to Send Articles of Impeachment Against Trump to Senate Without Delay – Hoyer

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives, widely expected to approve articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump later on Wednesday, plans to send the articles to the Senate this week, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer said in an interview on Wednesday.
"There is no reason why we can't send it this week and my expectation after discussion with the Speaker [Nancy Pelosi] is that we intend to do that," Hoyer said.
Hoyer added that Pelosi is likely to appoint impeachment managers later on Wednesday.
Following impeachment by the House, the Constitution requires the Senate to hold a trial presided over by the chief justice from the Supreme Court.
It remains unclear if a Senate trial of an impeached president can continue after the president leaves office - in this case with inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden on January 20 - since the situation had never occurred and is not explicitly addressed in the Constitution.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Majority in US Backs Impeachment, Fears More Violence as Inauguration Approaches – Poll

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) – More than half of US adults back efforts to impeach President Donald Trump following last week's attack on the Capitol by Trump supporters, while three-fourths expect more violence ahead of and during the upcoming the inauguration, according to a CBS/YouGov poll on Wednesday.
"Even as they widely condemn the violence at the Capitol last week, Americans say there could be more in the days to come: 74% think it at least somewhat likely that there could be more acts of violence attempted next week, during President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration," CBS said in a report explaining the poll.

A smaller majority (55 percent) feel that Trump should be impeached, the poll found.
The House is expected to vote later on Wednesday to impeach the president. However, removal of Trump from office during the remaining week of his presidency would require a Senate trial with two-thirds supermajority to convict.
Impeachment is overwhelmingly favored by Democrat and independent voters, but by just 15 percent of Republicans, according to the poll.
However, on Capitol Hill, support for Trump's ouster appears to be growing among influential Republicans following last week's riot in which angry Trump supporters stormed the Capitol
Impeachment articles introduced on Monday charge Trump with inciting an insurrection on January 6, when his supporters stormed Capitol Hill as Congress was certifying President-Elect Joe Biden's victory. The riots on Capitol Hill took place immediately after Trump delivered a speech near the White House calling on his supporters to fight to prevent the election from being "stolen."
Five people - four protesters and a police officer - were killed in the riots. The last time the Capitol was stormed was when British troops marched into Washington and set fire to the building in 1814.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

New York City Cuts Ties With Trump Organization Over 'Criminal Activity' - Mayor

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - New York City will cut all three of its business contracts with the Trump Organization over President Donald Trump's role in last week's deadly riots at the US Capitol, Mayor Bill de Blasio told MSNBC in an interview on Wednesday.
"The City of New York is severing all contracts with the Trump Organization," De Blasio said. "Inciting an insurrection against the United States' government clearly constitutes criminal activity."
De Blasio added that the contracts clearly state that the city can sever the arrangements over any kind of criminal activity.
The Trump Organization, made up of hundreds of businesses owned by the president, has three contracts to run concessions in New York City parks: the Central Park Carousel, Wollman and Lasker skating rinks, and Ferry Point Golf Course. The attractions bring the company $17 million a year, according to The Washington Post.
Trump, who the House impeached in 2019 on charges of obstructing Congress and abuse of power, faces a second impeachment proceeding on Wednesday over the January 6 attack on the Capitol by his supporters trying to prevent Congress from certifying the election win of his rival, President-elect Joe Biden.
The Democrat-majority House is expected to easily pass a resolution impeaching Trump for "incitement of an insurrection," making him the only president in US history to have been impeached twice.

Shortly before the attack, Trump addressed his supporters outside the Capitol, telling them to "show strength," and that "if you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country anymore." Five people, including a policeman, died in the Capitol attack. Trump's four-year term ends in exactly a week with Biden's January 20 inauguration as president.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US House Opens Session to Impeach Trump for 'Incitement of Insurrection'

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The US House of Representatives on Wednesday convened a session to impeach President Donald Trump for a second time over his "incitement of an insurrection" following last week's deadly riot at the Capitol.
"We are debating this historic measure at an actual crime scene, and we wouldn't be here if it weren't for the President of the United States," House Rules Chairman Jim McGovern said as the session got underway shortly after 9:00 a.m. local time.
The Democrat-majority House is expected to easily pass the resolution impeaching Trump for "high crimes and misdemeanors" over his role in the storming of the Capitol, making him the only president in US history to have been impeached twice.
The House is now proceeding with one hour of debate on the rule governing impeachment debate, and will hold a vote on the rule afterward. Lawmakers will then proceed with two hours of debate on the impeachment resolution before holding a final vote.
On January 6, Trump loyalists stormed the US Capitol building, after he urged them to protest against the certification of Electoral College votes by Congress. Five people including a police officer were killed as a result of the riot.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

New York City Cuts Ties With Trump Organization Over 'Criminal Activity' - Mayor

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - New York City will cut all of its business contracts with the Trump Organization over President Donald Trump's role in last week's deadly riots at the US Capitol, Mayor Bill de Blasio told MSNBC in an interview on Wednesday.
"The City of New York is severing all contracts with the Trump Organization," De Blasio said. "Inciting an insurrection against the United States' government clearly constitutes criminal activity."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

RPT: PREVIEW - US House to Vote on Impeaching Trump Over Capitol Hill 'Insurrection'

WASHINGTON, January 13 (Sputnik) - The Democratic-controlled US House of Representatives is expected to vote on Wednesday to impeach President Donald Trump over last week's violence on Capitol Hill, although chances are likely slim the Senate will decide to convict and remove him from office.

INSURRECTION CHARGES

While overall proceedings have little chance of being wrapped up before Joe Biden's inauguration on January 20, the impeachment - which is akin to an indictment - if successful, may bar Trump from holding public office ever again, including running for president in 2024.

Articles of impeachment introduced by the House Democrats on Monday accuse Trump of "high Crimes and Misdemeanors by inciting violence against the Government of the United States," including at the rally on January 6, immediately before his loyalists' attacked the Capitol in a bid to thwart the Congressional certification of Biden's win.

"Thus incited by President Trump, members of the crowd he had addressed.... unlawfully breached and vandalized the Capitol, injured and killed law enforcement personnel, menaced Members of the Congress, the Vice President, and Congressional personnel, and engaged in other violent, deadly, destructive, and seditious acts," the resolution said.

Some Republican leaders, however, have warned that impeaching Trump with just over a week before his term ends will only further divide the country.

Five people - four protesters and a police officer - were killed in the riots. The last time the Capitol was stormed was when British troops marched into Washington and set fire to the building in 1814.

The storming of the Capitol came immediately after Trump, in a fiery speech near the White House, urged his followers to fight and not allow the election to be "stolen."

Though Trump condemned the violence and committed himself to an orderly transition, there are fears of new flare-ups that prompted authorities to impose since Wednesday a security lockdown in downtown Washington, DC, and authorize the deployment of up to 15,000 National Guard servicemen.

Articles of impeachment also allege that in the months preceding the certification Trump repeatedly issued false statements asserting that the presidential election results were the product of widespread fraud and should not be accepted by the American people. The text mentions the incumbent's recent call to Georgia officials asking them to find enough votes for overturning his defeat.

US election security officials and the Justice Department have refuted Trump's claims of large-scale vote fraud.

Before launching impeachment proceedings, Democrats are urging Vice President Mike Pence to exercise his 25th amendment rights and together with other high-ranking executive officials strip Trump of his powers.

Their hopes were quashed when the White House announced that Pence and Trump met on Monday and pledged to work together for the rest of their term. The meeting reportedly marked the first time the duo talked since the riots.

The House of Representatives charges an official of the federal government by approving in a simple majority vote articles of impeachment. The Senate's subsequent role is to sit as a High

Court of Impeachment - considering evidence, hearing witnesses, and finally voting to acquit or convict the impeached official. The Constitution requires for conviction a two-thirds vote of the Senate. In some cases, the Senate has also disqualified such officials from holding public offices in the future.

ODDS SLIM, BUT REPUBLICAN RESISTANCE LESS FIERCE

In December 2019, Trump was impeached by the House of Representatives on the abuse of power and obstruction of Congress charges - over alleged attempts to force Ukraine into probing Biden's son. But the Senate, where the Republican Party enjoyed a majority, acquitted him in February 2020.

Though this time the impeachment may be held in the Democratic-led Senate, the 100-seat chamber is still unlikely to produce enough votes for finding Trump guilty. In the coming days, after all new Senate members are sworn in, Democrats will secure 50 seats with the Republicans retaining the other 50 and new Vice President Kamala Harris, also a Democrat, entitled to cast a decisive vote.

"They need enough support to get to 67 Senators, which would be 17 Republicans. That's a lot, and I don't think they have that much," Kermit Roosevelt, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, told Sputnik.

However, The New York Times reported on Tuesday that some Republican are not actively lobbying colleagues to vote against impeachment in the same way they did last year.

Republican leaders and Trump's lawyers warn that impeaching the incumbent days before or even after his term ends is not appropriate. Their opponents insist that there is strong historical evidence for "late impeachability" and it would set a dangerous precedent to declare misconduct unimpeachable if it's committed late enough in the term.

Some scholars entertain a possibility of slapping Trump with disqualification from future offices, which, as they claim, may require a simple majority vote at the Senate instead of a supermajority needed for a full-fledged impeachment.

Biden urged lawmakers to find time during impeachment proceedings to deal with his administration agenda. He supported an idea of dividing each day in half with evenings allocated to Trump's trial and mornings to Cabinet appointments or stimulus package deliberations.

On Tuesday, Trump told reporters that his possible impeachment is a "continuation of the greatest witch hunt in the history of politics."

"I think it's causing tremendous anger," he added.