

**06/11/21 Friday**

**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.**

Lapid Coalition Finalizes Deal to Form New Government, Divide Ministry Posts  
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

While parties across the Israeli political spectrum have united to end Benjamin Netanyahu's 12-year reign as prime minister, many remain skeptical of how much the alliance can accomplish. Others fear that with right-wing nationalist Naftali Bennett at the helm, the moderate and left-wing groups will be unable to contain his more radical agenda.

The eight parties opposing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have finalized their alliance, penning agreements with Yesh Atid leader Yair Lapid on Friday.

According to the [Times of Israel](#), the last to sign was Yamina, headed by Naftali Bennett, who is set to be the new prime minister after the swearing-in ceremony on Sunday. Earlier in the day, Lapid signed deals with Ra'am, Yisrael Beytenu, Labor, Blue and White, and New Hope, with Meretz coming to an agreement with Lapid on Thursday.

Under the [terms of the deal](#), Bennett will serve as prime minister until August 2023, when Lapid will take over and lead until November 2025 - assuming the government survives that long, of course. In the last three years, Israel has had four elections, and the coalition is [extremely diverse](#), including far-right nationalists, centrists, social democrats, and for the first time in Israeli history, an Islamist Arab party: the conservative Joint Arab List, or Ra'am.

While Bennett is head of government, Lapid will be deputy prime minister and foreign minister - offices Bennett will occupy when they rotate in 2023.

"The signing of these agreements brings to an end two and a half years of political crisis. We are faced with great challenges, and all the citizens of Israel are looking to us with hope," Bennett was quoted as saying in a joint statement by Yesh Atid and Yamina. "The government will work for all the Israeli public - religious, secular, ultra-Orthodox, Arab - without exception, as one."

Lapid said in the statement that the unity government was formed to do what's best for the country. "All the partners in this government are committed, first and foremost, to the people of Israel," he said.

Who Gets What?

The collective terms of the deal are [exceedingly complex](#), with the eight parties each vying to protect their own core ideological concerns. However, the overarching concern is satisfying Yamina and Yesh Atid, who will exercise joint power over the structure of the coalition and both of whom will have veto power over decisions made in the cabinet and ministerial committees. In addition to the prime ministership, Yamina will control the national service administration and the committee that appoints rabbinic judges, and party co-founder Ayelet Shaked will become Interior Minister.

New Hope has been given control over the Education and Justice ministries, with party chair Gideon Sa'ar taking the second portfolio, and they have been given a seat on the Judicial

Appointments Committee. New Hope also asked for changes to the judicial system, including splitting the attorney general's post into two posts, one for prosecution and another for government legal advice, and the passing of a basic law outlining the Knesset's relationship with the Supreme Court.

Ra'am has won a nine-month freeze in home demolitions in the Negev, as well as a three-year freeze on a law that enables demolition of so-called "illegal construction" that is often used to destroy Palestinian homes. It has also won \$16 billion in government funding to "reduce gaps in Arab, Druze, Circassian and Bedouin society" over the next few years, and formal recognition of three Bedouin communities within 45 days. Ra'am chair Mansour Abbas will head the Knesset's Interior Committee, and the party will also head the Arab Affairs Committee.

Meretz, a social democratic party, will hold three cabinet seats: Health, Environment, and Regional Cooperation. The party has won a provision to "advance the gay community's rights," but as Haaretz notes, it will be hard to convince the more conservative members of the coalition to accept any change toward allowing same-gender marriage in Israel.

Labor has won six ministers or deputy ministers, including Transportation for party chair Merav Michaeli, Public Security, and Diaspora Affairs, as well as the committees on the constitution, law and justice, and labor, welfare, and health. The party has also been given a seat on the Judicial Appointments Committee.

Blue and White leader Benny Gantz will retain his Defense Ministry post. The status of the [West Bank's Area C](#), which is under full military jurisdiction, will remain unchanged. The government will also revisit the national conscription law to possibly include an alternate national service track, and it will establish a commission to investigate the [Mount Meron disaster](#), in which 45 people were killed in a crowd crush on April 30 of this year.

The deal with Yisrael Beytenu will require the government adopt the 2016 Western Wall compromise, segregating male and female worshippers at the southern plaza, and half of the cabinet members on the committee will be women. They also won nonbinding support for authorizing city rabbis to conduct conversions, and have proposed an amendment depriving the interior minister of the ability to close businesses for Shabbat. Party chair Avigdor Liberman will control the Finance Ministry.

**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.**

Putin Says US-Russia Relations at Their Lowest Point in Recent Years  
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

Speaking to NBC News on Friday, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that relations between the United States and the Russian Federation had reached their nadir, but noted he is unworried about what he called the "Hollywood macho" of US President Joe Biden.

"Over my tenure, I've gotten used to attacks from all kinds of angles and from all kinds of areas under all kinds of pretext, and reasons and of different caliber and fierceness and none of it surprises me," Putin told NBC's Keir Simmons on Friday, speaking about Biden having calling him a "killer."

He added that "as far as harsh rhetoric, I think that this is an expression of overall US culture," calling it an example of "Hollywood macho."

"I have heard dozens of such accusations, especially during the period of some great events, during our counterterrorism efforts in North Caucasus. And when that happens I am always guided by the interests of the Russian people, of the Russian state," Putin said.

"Sentiments in terms who calls somebody whom, what kind of labels that is not something I am worried about in the least," he added.

Putin and Biden are due to have their first in-person summit on June 16 in Geneva, Switzerland, to "discuss the full range of pressing issues, as we seek to restore predictability and stability to the US-Russia relationship," as the White House [put it last month](#).

The Kremlin described the agenda a bit differently, stating that "We intend to discuss the state and prospects of further development of Russian-American relations, problems of strategic stability, as well as topical issues on the international agenda, including interaction in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic and the settlement of regional conflicts."

Before then, however, Biden is meeting with the Group of Seven (G7) nations - from which Russia has been excluded since 2014 - as well as with other members of the NATO alliance.

"I'm headed to the G7, then to the NATO ministerial and then to meet with Mr. Putin to let him know what I want him to know," Biden said Friday, speaking at [RAF Mildenhall](#) airfield in Suffolk, England.

Trump is a 'Talented Individual'

Putin told NBC that US-Russian relations had reached their lowest point in recent years, and while he didn't say it was because of Biden, a Democrat, succeeding Republican Donald Trump as president, he did contrast the two American leaders.

"I believe that former US president Mr. Trump is an extraordinary individual, talented individual, otherwise he would not have become US President," Putin said of the former US head of state, who left office in January after losing a re-election attempt to Biden. "He is a colorful individual. You may like him or not. And, but he didn't come from the US establishment, he had not been part of big time politics before, and some like it some don't like it but that is a fact."

He described Biden as a "career man," noting he was radically different from Trump not because of his political persuasion, but because "He has spent virtually his entire adulthood in politics."

"That's a different kind of person, and it is my great hope that yes, there are some advantages, some disadvantages, but there will not be any impulse-based movements, on behalf of the sitting US president," he added.

Report Russia is Giving Iran Satellites is 'Garbage'

The Russian president also dismissed a report in Thursday's [Washington Post claiming](#) Moscow is preparing to deliver an advanced spy satellite to Iran.

"We have cooperation plans with Iran, including the military and technical cooperation," Putin said. "It's just fake news. At the very least, I don't know anything about this kind of thing, those who are speaking about it probably will maybe know more about it. It's just nonsense, garbage." According to the report, which is based on "current and former US and Middle Eastern officials briefed on details of the arrangement" who "spoke on the condition of anonymity, citing sensitivities surrounding ongoing intelligence collection efforts," the Russian government is

preparing to give Tehran a Kanopus-V or [Kanopus-B satellite](#), a civilian high-resolution imaging satellite.

Interestingly, when asked about the report, the US State Department replied simply that it was "[aware of it](#)" and refused to speak even of hypothetical responses to it.

According to NBC, the full interview will be aired on Monday evening.

**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.**

Netanyahu Offered Gantz Prime Ministership for Three Years in Attempt to Block Lapid Gov - Reports

by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

As the eight parties forming Yair Lapid's coalition to unseat him finalized the terms of their alliance, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made one final, desperate bid to stay in power: offering his defense minister, Benny Gantz, the prime minister's seat for three years. According to Israel's Channel 12 television network, the Likud chairman has made Gantz multiple offers in an attempt to preserve their crumbling coalition, all of which Gantz's Blue and White party have rejected.

The most recent of these, made on Friday morning, was for Netanyahu to immediately step down and give Gantz the office he [ran against Netanyahu](#) to win: the prime ministership.

However, according to the [Times of Israel](#), Netanyahu is widely seen as having cancelled Likud's alliance with Blue and White late last year, in order to avoid handing his office over to Gantz, as the terms of their deal had laid out.

Instead of taking Netanyahu's offer, though, on Friday Gantz went to Lapid, head of Yesh Atid and the man tapped by Israeli President Reuven Rivlin to form a new government, after Netanyahu failed to finalize the terms of their new alliance.

The coalition, which just barely forms a majority in the Knesset, includes eight parties spanning the length of Israeli politics, from the right-wing and religious Yisrael Beytenu and nationalist Yamina, the latter headed by Netanyahu's soon-to-be replacement, Naftali Bennett; to the social democratic Labor and Meretz parties; the centrist Yesh Atid, Blue and White and New Hope parties; and the conservative Arab party Ra'am.

Under the [terms of their deal](#), Gantz will retain his post as Defense Minister and push forward several areas of his own concern, such as reforming the national conscription system.

Netanyahu has [raised dire warnings](#) about the Lapid coalition, calling it a "dangerous left-wing government," prompting some of the right-wing members of the group to fire back, urging the 12-year prime minister to accept that governments come and go.

"Let go," [Bennett told Netanyahu](#) on Wednesday. "Let the country move forward. People are allowed to vote for a government even if you do not lead it - a government that, by the way, is 10 degrees to the right of the current one."

Netanyahu has pledged to fight the new government as the opposition in the Knesset.

**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's Brother Ditches UK Clean Energy Project After WH Review of Ethics, Standards for Relatives

by [Evan Craighead](#)

James Biden, younger brother of US President Joe Biden, and his wife, Sara Biden, launched an energy investment project in May as part of a UK limited liability partnership with Peter Teare, a partner at Reed Smith. The investment vehicle, dubbed Shelbourne Partners, aimed to explore financing opportunities, particularly in the clean energy sector.

Weeks after the formation of Shelbourne Partners, James Biden has already parted ways with the UK-based clean energy investment vehicle, according to a report published Thursday by the [Financial Times](#).

The move comes shortly after a White House review of possible conflicts of interest in the Biden administration.

"The president adopted ethics rules and standards for his administration that surpass those of any other administration in history, and include standards for his relatives," a White House official told the UK outlet.

Per the new set of ethics and standards, family members of the 46th president of the US will be subject to a review by the White House counsel's office.

Though members of the president's family will be advised by the office on whether to proceed, the White House recommendations are not binding for the family members.

Peter Teare, who entered into the UK limited liability partnership with James and Sara Biden, asserted that the public would be "mistaken" to link the Bidens' decision to the White House's ethics review.

However, Teare did not expound on the subject, telling the outlet that he could not "discuss James' and Sara's private business affairs including the reasons why they may decide to pursue a particular opportunity or not."

The White House's approach, as well as James Biden's recent move, fall in line with the US president's previous comments.

"Will your brothers, will your son take leave from any business interests, not just foreign, but any business interests that might create any even appearance of impropriety?" CNN's Jake Tapper asked Biden back in December, prior to his inauguration.

"My son, my family will not be involved in any business, any enterprise, that is in conflict with or appears to be in conflict, with the appropriate distance from, the presidency and government," he replied.

The same month, it [was announced](#) that federal authorities with the Western District of Pennsylvania would be criminally investigating Americore Health, and had questions concerning James Biden's ties to the bankrupt company.

Additionally, the US president's 51-year-old son, Hunter Biden has come under fire in recent years for his work with Ukrainian energy company Burisma. It was [reported earlier this month](#) that the US Department of Justice is probing whether Blue Star Strategies, a lobbying and

investment firm linked to Burisma during Hunter Biden's tenure, conducted illegal lobbying practices.

Additionally, Hunter Biden is the subject of an ongoing Delaware investigation into possible tax violations.

**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.**

Kim Jong Un Dubs K-Pop a 'Vicious Cancer' Capable of Corrupting North Korean Youths  
by [Evan Craighead](#)

Back in December, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un intensified the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) culture war against South Korean media by introducing heftier labor camp sentences for individuals caught indulging in such entertainment. While the maximum punishment was set at five years of hard labor, it is now five to 15 years.

As K-pop fandom continues to grow in South Korea and other parts of the world, the North Korean government and the DPRK leader are reiterating the country's stance on South Korean music and media.

The 37-year-old leader of the DPRK recently referred to K-pop as a "vicious cancer," that has the potential to corrupt North Korean youths with unsavory "attire, hairstyles, speeches, behaviors," according to the [New York Times](#), citing state media.

North Korean state media emphasized that, if left unchecked, K-pop and related forms of South Korean entertainment could make the DPRK "crumble like a damp wall."

Kim's anti-K-pop sentiments are nothing new, as the North Korean leader spoke out in April about what he perceived to be "a serious change" in the "ideological and mental state" of North Korean youths.

Furthermore, due to recent legislation, North Koreans caught indulging in South Korean media can be sentenced to five to 15 years of hard labor.

"Young North Koreans think they owe nothing to Kim Jong Un," Jung Gwang Il, a defector from North Korea, told the Times.

"He must reassert his ideological control on the young if he doesn't want to lose the foundation for the future of his family's dynastic rule," added Jung, who reportedly runs a smuggling ring to transport K-pop into the DPRK.

Relatedly, the South Korean government [has instituted](#) fines and jail time for those caught sending material critical of the North Korean government across the border.

These acts, typically carried out by human rights organizations and North Korean defectors, now carry up to three years in prison and a maximum fine of \$27,000.

**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.**

Donald Trump Says He's 'Writing Like Crazy' Amid Reports of His Dissatisfaction With Pence Book Deal

by [Evan Craighead](#)

Former US Vice President Mike Pence has secured a book deal with US publisher Simon & Schuster that is reportedly valued around somewhere between \$3 million to \$5 million. Pence, who recently purchased a \$1.9 million home in Indiana, is slated to release his first of two books in 2023.

Former US President Donald Trump issued a statement on Monday asserting that he is hard at work on a new project that is taking precedence over any potential book deals.

"I turned down two book deals, from the most unlikely of publishers, in that I do not want to do such a deal right now," Trump's statement read.

"I'm writing like crazy anyway, however, and when the time comes, you'll see the book of all books," he added. "Actually, I've been working on a much more important project right now!" In response to Trump's statement, New York Times reporter Maggie Haberman alleged that [Pence's book deal](#) "is said to have been grating on him."

Back in April, Simon & Schuster announced its two-book deal with Pence and almost immediately received backlash from company staffers and regular consumers.

Nevertheless, the US publisher has decided to honor its deal with Pence, as the US is in a "polarized era" and a "diversity of voices and perspectives are necessary.

Pence's first book with the publisher is said to be on the former US vice president's "faith and public service."

**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.**

Astronomers Uncover Mysterious 'Blinking' Star Within Center of Milky Way

by [Gaby Arancibia](#)

Stellar pulsations are caused by the repeated contraction and expansion of the outer layers of stars, a process that occurs in order for the object to maintain equilibrium, but also causes the luminosity of the heavenly body to fluctuate and give off a pulse-like glimmer. Now, researchers have found a star that lost nearly all of its brightness.

Astronomers have discovered a massive blinking stellar object at the center of the Milky Way that seemed to nearly disappear from the cosmos after an unknown celestial body eclipsed the star, a study published Friday has revealed.

The star, which officials have named VVV-WIT-08, is situated some 25,000 light-years away, and is said to be 100 times larger than the Sun. The "WIT" portion of the star's name stems from the "what is this" category.

An international team of astronomers were able to pinpoint the so-called "blinking" star when reviewing data dating back to 2010 that was collected by the European Southern Observatory's Vista telescope in Chile.

Officials determined that the star began to fade in early 2012 and nearly vanished by April 2012 before suddenly regaining its luminosity over the next 100 days. Telescope observations indicate the star temporarily lost about 97% of its brightness.

Leigh Smith, an astronomer with Cambridge University's Institute of Astronomy who also led the study, [told](#) The Guardian that the dark object "appeared to come out of nowhere."

As to what caused the star to shy away from the limelight, researchers remain unsure, but have speculated that a much larger unknown dark object may have simply eclipsed VVV-WIT-08.

While simulations suggested that such an event would be highly unlikely without a high number of dark objects, researchers believe it's much more plausible that the Vista telescope's view of the star was either blocked by a dusty disc surrounding an orbiting planet, or that another star simply took centerstage during that specified period of time.

It's worth noting that although VVV-WIT-08 is not the first "blinking" star that astronomers have uncovered, the stellar being is more than likely to help provide a better understanding of the potential new class of giant stars. One of the more popular such stars is known as [Epsilon Aurigae](#), which loses about half of its brightness every 27 years.

Researchers believe that VVV-WIT-08 could dim once again in the next 20 to 200 years.

The team's findings will be included in the [August 2021 edition](#) of the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

**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.**

'Do Better': Top CDC Chief Warns US Must Invest in Public Health to Be Ready for Next Pandemic

by [Gaby Arancibia](#)

Since the height of the pandemic, the US has mostly parted ways with many of the strict restrictions put in place in order to curb the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the deadly virus that causes COVID-19. In fact, many who are now fully vaccinated have been cleared to go maskless under certain circumstances.

Anne Schuchat, the principal deputy director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), recently warned that if the US fails to maintain its current investments in the public health system, it will more than likely be ill-prepared if and when the next pandemic arises.

The top CDC official underscored during a [Wednesday interview](#) with The Hill that the US failed to initially roll out an adequate response to the pandemic because the federal government had been sidestepping its investments in the public health infrastructure for multiple years.

"I think the critical learning about how to do better next time is the need to greatly invest in public health, and not just respond to emergencies," Schuchat said. "This is a big job, and it can't be like Ebola or H1N1 where there's emergency funding and then everything goes away."

"This needs to be sustained, or we will be exactly where we were last year," the official added, highlighting that the US' supply shortages, such as those regarding the [ventilators](#) at the onset of the pandemic, proved to be a much-needed "wake up call" for authorities.

She further emphasized that "the more coordinated, science-based and learning or response you have, you know, a response that's committed to continual improvement, the more effective the prevention will be."

Schuchat's remarks largely echoed those she gave during an [interview](#) with NPR's "Morning Edition" the week prior. At the time, she had also indicated that there is still "a lot of work to do" in order for the US to get back on track and prepared for any outbreaks that could emerge in the years to come.

Touching on the current state of the vaccination program within the US, Schuchat called on the American public to remain vigilant as many countries are dealing with different stages of their own COVID-19 outbreaks. "It's really important that we remember the global situation," she noted.

[Latest figures](#) provided by the CDC state that more than 64.1% of Americans have been partially vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus. US President Joe Biden has set a target of July 4 to get at least 70% of US adults partially vaccinated.

**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: Massive Sinkhole in Mexico Begins Consuming Nearby Home, Traps Two Dogs  
by [Gaby Arancibia](#)

Reports initially surfaced in late May that an enormous sinkhole measuring at 300 feet across had emerged in the town of Zacatepec, in Mexico's Puebla state. However, in the weeks since, it has continued to grow in both width and depth.

A massive sinkhole in east-central Mexico recently prompted the deployment of law enforcement authorities to ensure a security barrier after the sinkhole extended its reach and began to consume a nearby home.

[Latest figures](#) place the sinkhole at over 400 feet across in some places and roughly 150 feet deep, although officials have warned that it's presently difficult to pinpoint an exact depth as the crater is filled with water.

Since its [emergence](#), the sinkhole has managed to trap two dogs who have been stranded on a ledge situated some 50 feet above the surface of the crater's water, and has also started eating away at the perimeter wall of a nearby house.

Despite pleas from the public, authorities have indicated that they are unable to remove the dogs, named Spay and Spike, as a result of the continued deterioration of loose soil along the sinkhole's edges.

However, state government officials have noted that they have been able to safely drop down food to the pair of the dogs. According to the [Mexico News Daily](#), the dogs fell into the sinkhole on Monday at about 7 p.m. local time after Spay, an eight-month-old pit bull, began playing with a local stray dog and crossed the security barrier.

Soldiers deployed by the Mexican government are ensuring that locals and interested passersby are keeping some 2,000 feet away from the edge of the sinkhole.

Although authorities have yet to determine the cause of the sinkhole, public speculation ranges between excessive groundwater extraction by nearby factories, geological faults in the soil content and a possible underground river that was previously undetected.

An official determination is expected sometime in the next few days. Puebla Gov. Miguel Barbosa told the media that if water extraction caused the incident, he would opt to cancel any further permits.

**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 - Atlantic Charter 'Pure Window Dressing,' UK Already in Lockstep With US - Ex-British Envoy

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The new Atlantic Charter announced by President Joe Biden and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is only for show and will make no difference whatsoever given London already walks in lockstep with Washington, former British ambassador Peter Ford told Sputnik.

On Thursday, Biden and Johnson unveiled what they dubbed the "New Atlantic Charter," reaffirming commitments set out 80 years ago to boost cooperation against common adversaries.

"I see this as pure window dressing. The UK already marches in lockstep with the US," Ford said. "This new agreement will make no difference."

Besides, Ford said, US-UK cooperation proceeds mainly by stealth, away from the public gaze, in areas of loosely defined "security."

In the charter, the two leaders also declared their commitment to keeping NATO "a nuclear alliance." The framework, they said, will promote responsible state behavior in cyberspace and arms control to reduce the risks of international conflict.

The original Atlantic Charter was signed by UK Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the dawn of World War II.

Ford was UK ambassador to Bahrain and Syria before joining the United Nations to work on refugee issues. He also served in Beirut, Cairo, Riyadh, Singapore and Paris as a UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) diplomat.

**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 - McDonald's Halts Personal Data Breach in South Korea, Taiwan

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The fast food restaurant chain McDonald's identified and contained unauthorized activity on its network that put the personal information of employees and customers at risk, the company told Sputnik.

"While we were able to close off access quickly after identification, our investigation has determined that a small number of files were accessed, some of which contained personal data. Based on our investigation, only Korea and Taiwan had customer personal data accessed, and

they will be taking steps to notify regulators and customers listed in these files," McDonald's said in a statement.

McDonald's pointed out that no customer payment information was contained in the breached files while several markets will be taking steps to address files that contained the personal data of employees.

The also said it has company conducted an investigation in conjunction with experienced third parties to determine the extent of the breach and plans on leveraging the findings of the investigation to enhance their existing cybersecurity measures.

**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.**

**Detained Elderly Japanese Man May Be Russian Informant on Advanced US Space Tech - Reports**

TOKYO, June 11 (Sputnik) - The head of a technical documentation processing company Kazuo Miyasaki, who was detained in Japan, may have passed on to Russian data on the latest US space industry technologies, media reported Saturday.

According to Japanese public broadcaster NHK, the man in custody admitted to police that he shared with Russia information about the X37B, or the Boeing Orbital Test Vehicle.

Miyasaki also told the investigators that over the past 30 years, he transferred data to a total of 15 employees of Russian intelligence services and received about 10 million yen (about \$91,000) in compensation.

On Thursday, Japanese media reported on the detention of the former head of a research company in Kanagawa Prefecture on suspicion of illegal use of databases and the transfer of information related to military technologies to an employee of the Russian trade mission in Japan.

Earlier it was reported that 70-year-old Miyasaki had a long history of running a technical literature research company.

The Russian Embassy in Japan said on Friday that it was studying the situation.

**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.**

**Explosion at Coal Mine in Colombia Leaves at Least 2 Dead, 7 Trapped, - Reports**

BUENOS AIRES, June 11 (Sputnik) - An explosion at a coal mine in central Colombia has left two people dead and another seven trapped, the country's National Mining Agency reported.

There were 12 miners at the location in the Socha municipality of the mountainous Boyaca Department when the explosion occurred, the agency reported.

Rescuers managed to get three people out of the wreckage and retrieve the two bodies.

Efforts to locate and rescue the remaining seven are underway.

**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.**

#### Greek Vaccination Committee Approves Entry For Travelers With Russian, Chinese Vaccines

ATHENS, June 11 (Sputnik) - Greece's National Vaccination Committee has approved the entry into the country of tourists vaccinated against COVID-19 with the Russian Sputnik V vaccine and a slew of Chinese vaccines, Vana Papaevangelou, a member of the Commission of Epidemiologists, said at a briefing on Friday.

In May, the Greek government announced that Russians vaccinated with Sputnik V would be able to enter the country.

Papaevangelou said that at the meeting of the vaccination committee, the experience of the previous tourist season was discussed and the corresponding sanitary protocols were updated. According to her, the entry of tourists is allowed, provided that all tourists over 6 years old provide either a negative PCR test is done 72 hours before arrival in Greece, or a certificate of vaccination, or a certificate of recent coronavirus infection.

"In cooperation with the National Vaccination Committee, we have introduced third-party vaccines that are required to enter the country, in addition to the vaccines already accepted by the European Union, EMA [European Medicines Agency]. In particular, we have approved the vaccines Novavax, Sinovac, Sputnik (V), Sinopharm and Cansino Biologics," Papaevangelou said.

Greece has opened its borders for tourists since May 14 - restrictions on the entry of foreign tourists, including Russian ones, have been lifted; The Ministry of Tourism promises them a safe holiday. Most of the restrictions imposed six months ago due to the coronavirus pandemic are also being lifted.

Tourists from Russia, despite the approval, were still unable to vacation in Greece since Russian authorities have so far limited regular flights and have not given permission for charter flights.

Now the regular service has been resumed only partially, with four regular flights Moscow-Athens per week for Aeroflot and Aegean.

**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.**

#### Putin Says Not Worried When Asked About Biden Calling Him 'Killer'

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin said that he is not worried about being called "killer" by his US counterpart Joe Biden and dismissed harsh rhetoric as an expression of overall American culture.

"Over my tenure, I've gotten used to attacks from all kinds of angles and from all kinds of areas under all kinds of pretext and reasons and of different caliber and fierceness and none of it

surprises me. So as far as harsh rhetoric, I think it is an expression of overall US culture," US broadcaster NBC quoted Putin as saying in an interview ahead of his meeting with Biden next week.

In March, Biden set off a diplomatic firestorm after answering in the affirmative when asked whether he considered Putin to be a killer during an interview with ABC News. Russia afterwards recalled its ambassador from Washington for consultations on the entirety of the bilateral relationship.

During the interview NBC correspondent Keir Simmons asked Putin, "Mr. President, are you a killer?"

"I have heard dozens of such accusations, especially during the period of some great events, during our counterterrorism efforts in North Caucasus. And when that happens I am always guided by the interests of the Russian people, of the Russian state," Putin said.

"That's part of the US political culture where it is considered normal. By the way not here. It is not considered normal here... Sentiments in terms who calls somebody whom, what kind of labels that is not something I am worried about in the least," he added.

When further pressed by Simmons's over alleged killings Putin retorted that "this looks like some kind of indigestion except that it is verbal indigestion." He added that the alleged victims the interviewer mentioned "indeed suffered and perished at different points in time for various reasons, at the hands of different individuals."

"You mentioned Lesin, Lesin used to work in my administration. I liked him very much. He died, he perished in the United States. I regret to this day that he is not with us. In my opinion he was a very decent, very good person," Putin said.

Former Russian Press Minister Mikhail Lesin was found dead in a Washington, DC hotel in November 2015. US investigators concluded that his death was an accident and not a homicide. "As far as the others we found some of the criminals who committed those crimes, some are in prison," Putin said.

He said that the Russian authorities are prepared to work "in this mode" to bring the rest of those responsible to justice.

**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.**

**Maduro Demands Biden Admin. Unfreeze Venezuelan Payments to COVAX For COVID-19 Vaccines**

BUENOS AIRES, June 11 (Sputnik) - Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro demanded the US release the funds the country paid for vaccines through the COVAX scheme.

A day prior, Venezuela's Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza made public a letter from COVAX officials stating that four payments totaling some \$4.6 million had been blocked. Altogether, Caracas has made 12 payments for a total sum of over \$100 million.

"This is criminal theft, these are criminal sanctions, the criminal actions of the United States against Venezuela. I demand that the Joe Biden government stop blocking money for the purchase of vaccines," Maduro said at a public address on Friday.

At the same time, the president stressed that the COVAX facility has received enough Venezuelan funds to begin vaccine shipments.

"The COVAX system has already received sufficient funds to immediately start supplying vaccines. It has no reason not to. We paid more than \$100 million," Maduro said in the speech. Venezuela has been relying on a mix of international sources for its COVID-19 vaccination campaign, mainly relying on Russia's Sputnik V vaccine as well as China's Sinopharm and AstraZeneca supplied through the WHO-led COVAX scheme.

The US imposed a series of sanctions on Venezuela since 2017 in an attempt to force Maduro's resignation, who was accused by the US of corruption, human rights violations and manipulation of his 2018 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.**

Canada to Supply Up to 100Mln COVID Vaccine Doses as Part of G7 1Bln Dose Pledge - Envoy

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Canada will contribute up to 100 million COVID-19 vaccine doses as part of a Group of Seven pledge to donate 1 billion doses to developing nations, Canada's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom Ralph Goodale said.

Pandemic recovery, including vaccine equity, is expected to be a central theme at the annual meeting of the heads of the world's largest developed economies. US President Joe Biden has already committed to sharing 500 million doses, while Prime Minister Boris Johnson has earmarked 100 million shots on behalf of the UK.

"Canada's global number is up to 100 million [doses]," Goodale told reporters on Friday, when asked about Ottawa's contribution to the G7 goal.

Goodale elaborated that Canada's contribution would be the cumulative equivalent of 100 million doses based on a combination of physical doses and comparative monetary considerations. Goodale noted that the full breakdown of the pledge would be unveiled on Sunday.

Canada's envoy to the UK stressed that Canadians should not be worried about domestic vaccine supply in light of the expected contribution and the country's troubles with vaccine procurement.

The top-level G7 summit is taking place in the Cornish seaside resort town of Carbis Bay from Friday to Sunday.

**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.**

Putin Dismisses Reports of Russia Offering Iran Advanced Satellite System as 'Nonsense'

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin dismissed as "nonsense" and "fake news" US media reports that Russia is preparing to offer Iran an advanced satellite system.

"We have cooperation plans with Iran, including the military and technical cooperation. It's just fake news. At the very least, I don't know anything about this kind of thing, those who are speaking about it probably will maybe know more about it. It's just nonsense, garbage," US broadcaster NBC quoted Putin as saying in an interview in response to a question about the purported Russia-Iran satellite deal.

On Thursday, the Washington Post alleged that Russia is in the midst of delivering to Iran an advanced Earth observation satellite Kanopus-V equipped with a high-resolution camera as it was agreed by Iranian and Russian companies in 2015.

The publication speculated that the satellite will enable Iran to track military targets, including remaining US troops in Iraq.

**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.**

**Putin Says Not Worried When Asked About Biden Calling Him 'Killer'**

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin said that he is not worried about being called "killer" by his US counterpart Joe Biden and dismissed harsh rhetoric as an expression of overall American culture.

"Over my tenure, I've gotten used to attacks from all kinds of angles and from all kinds of areas under all kinds of pretext and reasons and of different caliber and fierceness and none of it surprises me," US broadcaster NBC quoted Putin as saying in an interview ahead of his meeting with Biden next week.

In March, Biden set off a diplomatic firestorm after answering in the affirmative when asked whether he considered Putin to be a killer during an interview with ABC News. Russia afterwards recalled its ambassador from Washington for consultations on the entirety of the bilateral relationship.

"This is not something I worry about in the least... None of this surprises me. So as far as harsh rhetoric, I think it is an expression of overall US culture," Putin said about Biden's accusations. According to NBC, he called the "killer" label "Hollywood macho."

When further pressed over alleged killings by NBC correspondent Keir Simmons Putin said that "this looks like some kind of indigestion except that it is verbal indigestion." He added that many individuals the interviewer mentioned "indeed suffered and perished at different points in time for various reasons, at the hands of different individuals."

**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.**

**Putin Says US-Russia Relationship at Lowest Point in Years**

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin said that the relationship between Russia and the United States is at its lowest in recent years.

"We have a bilateral relationship that has deteriorated to its lowest point in recent years," Putin said in an interview to US broadcaster NBC ahead of his meeting with the American counterpart Joe Biden next week.

**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.**

**Putin Says Trump 'a Colorful Individual,' Biden, a 'Career Man'**

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin said that the former US leader Donald Trump was a colorful individual radically different from his successor Joe Biden, whom he labeled as "a career man."

"Well even now, I believe that former US president Mr. Trump is an extraordinary individual, talented individual, otherwise he would not have become US President. He is a colorful individual. You may like him or not. And, but he didn't come from the US establishment, he had not been part of big time politics before, and some like it some don't like it but that is a fact," US broadcaster NBC quoted Putin as saying in an interview ahead of his meeting with Biden next week.

Putin described the incumbent as "a career man."

"He has spent virtually his entire adulthood in politics. That's a different kind of person, and it is my great hope that yes, there are some advantages, some disadvantages, but there will not be any impulse-based movements, on behalf of the sitting US president," he 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.**

**Putin Dismisses Reports of Russia Offering Iran Advanced Satellite System as 'Nonsense'**

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin dismissed as "nonsense" and "fake news" US media reports that Russia is preparing to offer Iran an advanced satellite system.

"We have cooperation plans with Iran, including the military and technical cooperation. It's just fake news. At the very least, I don't know anything about this kind of thing, those who are speaking about it probably will maybe know more about it. It's just nonsense, garbage," US broadcaster NBC quoted Putin as saying in an interview in response to a question about the purported Russia-Iran satellite deal.

**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.**

**Putin Says Not Worried When Asked About Biden Calling Him 'Killer'**

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin said that he is not worried about being called "killer" by his US counterpart Joe Biden.

"Over my tenure, I've gotten used to attacks from all kinds of angles and from all kinds of areas under all kinds of pretext and reasons and of different caliber and fierceness and none of it surprises me," US broadcaster NBC quoted Putin as saying in an interview ahead of his meeting with Biden next week.

According to the channel, Putin called the "killer" label "Hollywood macho."

**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.**

**No Plans Yet for Biden-Trudeau Meeting at G7 - Canada Envoy to UK**

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - There are no set plans in place at present for a one-on-one meeting between Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and US President Joe Biden at the G7 Summit, Canada's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom Ralph Goodale said.

"Not an official [meeting], at this point in time," Goodale told reporters on Friday when asked about the possibility of an official bilateral meeting during the three-day summit.

Goodale, however, noted that the two may speak informally, as they did on Friday, throughout the weekend and that the lines of communication are always open between the two leaders.

While a bilateral meeting between Trudeau and Biden does not appear to be in the cards at this point, the Canadian Prime Minister will meet with French President Emmanuel Macron as well as German and Italian counterparts, Angela Merkel and Mario Draghi.

The top-level G7 summit is taking place in the Cornish seaside resort town of Carbis Bay from Friday to Sunday.

**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 Condemns Terrorist Attack on Mine Clearance Workers in Afghanistan**

UNITED NATIONS, June 11 (Sputnik) - The UN Security Council said in a statement that its members condemned the terrorist attacks perpetrated by the Islamic State terror group (banned in Russia) on humanitarian mine clearance workers in Afghanistan.

"The members of the Security Council condemned in the strongest terms the atrocious and cowardly targeted attack against humanitarian mine clearance workers that took place in Baghlan-e-Markazi, Afghanistan, on 8 June 2021," the statement 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.**

*Blinken Discusses With Argentine Counterpart Democracy in Nicaragua - US State Dept.*

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke over the telephone with his Argentinian counterpart Felipe Sola and discussed efforts to promote democracy in Nicaragua as well as other issues, State Department spokesperson Ned Price said.

"Blinken spoke today with Argentine Foreign Minister Felipe Sola to discuss the importance of bilateral, regional, and international efforts to promote democracy and human rights in Nicaragua," Price said on Friday.

On Wednesday, the US Treasury Department announced the inclusion of the four Nicaraguan nationals, including the president's daughter, to its Specially Designated Nationals sanctions list. The sanctions came in response to a series of what Price referred to as "arbitrary arrests" of opposition politicians ahead of a presidential election in Nicaragua.

The government of President Daniel Ortega had detained several political opponents in the run-up to the election, including presidential hopefuls Arturo Jose Cruz Sequeira and Cristiana Chamorro, both of whom sought to unseat Ortega as he attempts to run for a fourth term. Blinken and Sola also discussed the United States' desire to continue developing a cooperative relationship with Argentina in the promotion of human rights and democracy around Latin America.

**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 Trade Representative to Meet With British Counterpart in London Wednesday*

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - US Trade Representative Katherine Tai on Wednesday will travel to London to meet with her British counterpart as part of her trip to Europe to join US President Joe Biden at the summit with the European Union (EU) on a day before, the office of the representative said in a release.

"On Wednesday, June 16, Ambassador Tai will travel to London and hold bilateral meetings with Secretary of State for International Trade, Elizabeth Truss. Ambassador Tai will return to the United States on Thursday, June 17," the release said on Friday.

Tai will travel to Brussels to meet with European Commission Executive Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis and to join Biden at the US-EU summit on June 15 which will focus on a broad

range of mutual issues, including post-pandemic economic recovery, strengthening of democracy, and foreign policy concerns, the release said.

On Thursday, Tai announced that while in Brussels she will focus primarily on attempts to resolve the 16-year old Boeing-Airbus disputes and address steps to counter unfair trade policies from China and other countries undermining competition.

The trade war between the United States and the 27-nation European bloc broke out in 2018 under then-President Donald Trump as part of his strategy to impose new tariffs to change US trade policy and reduce the trade deficit.

**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 Approves \$46Mln to Address Refugee, Migration Needs in Central America - White House**

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - President Joe Biden said in a statement he has approved \$46 million in funding to address urgent refugee and migration needs in Central America.

"I hereby determine, pursuant to section 2(c)(1) of the MRAA, that it is important to the national interest to furnish assistance under the MRAA in an amount not to exceed \$46 million from the United States Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund for the purpose of meeting unexpected urgent refugee and migration needs... related to the humanitarian needs of vulnerable refugees and migrants in Central America and third countries in the region," Biden said on Friday.

**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 Writing 'Book of All Books,' Working on 'Important Project'**

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Former US President Donald Trump announced he was writing a book and working on a project in a press release with scant details.

"I turned down two book deals, from the most unlikely of publishers, in that I do not want to do such a deal right now. I'm writing like crazy anyway, however, and when the time comes, you'll see the book of all books," the statement, released through his Save America political action group.

He finished off the statement with "Actually, I've been working on a much more important project right now!" without elaborating.

**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.**

## Canadian Political Leader Arrested by Federal Police for Violating COVID-19 Restrictions

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The leader of the People's Party of Canada (PPC) Maxime Bernier has been arrested by the federal police force for violating Manitoba's provincial coronavirus-related restrictions.

A video posted to the politician's Twitter account on Friday afternoon showed Bernier being placed under arrest by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in the rural village of St-Pierre-Jolys, Manitoba.

"Bernier, a political leader, was wrongfully arrested on charges that violate his constitutional rights as a Canadian citizen," the PPC said in a fundraising letter later in the day, although the letter did not specify the charges the politician faces.

Canada's former foreign minister, who has vehemently opposed the country's stringent pandemic-induced restrictions, is currently in the middle of his "Mad Max" tour of Manitoba, as the province remains largely in lockdown amid a battle with the so-called third wave of the coronavirus pandemic.

Bernier was warned of the consequences of going forward with his planned rallies by Mike Leblanc, the manager of the Health Protection Unit within Manitoba's Department of Health, however, went ahead with the events citing the need to counter the restrictive measures.

While countries around the world continue to loosen public health restrictions with vaccination rates on the rise, much of Canada remains in lockdown, spurring allegations of violations of Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms from some political forces, including the PPC, and civil liberties advocates.

**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 Has 'Every Intention' to Raise Human Rights Issues With Putin - White House

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - White House spokesperson Jen Psaki said on Friday that US President Joe Biden has "every intention" to raise the issue of human rights in Russia during the meeting with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Geneva next week.

Earlier on Friday, CNN quoted Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov as saying that Putin has no plans to engage with Biden on the issue concerning jailed opposition figure Alexei Navalny.

"It may not be on his agenda. And that's not a surprise. But certainly the President has every intention to raise human rights abuses, the jailing of dissidents and activists which is a violation of what we feel should be norms around the world," Psaki said in an interview with CNN.

However, Psaki said Biden hold back in raising issues of concern and will be straightforward and direct with Putin.

"That's the benefit of meeting in person. That's different than a phone call," she added.

Navalny was arrested in January upon his arrival in Russia from Germany, where he received medical treatment for an alleged poisoning. A court rescinded his suspended sentence in the 2014 Yves Rocher fraud case over multiple probation breaches and sentenced Navalny to two-and-a-half years in prison.

Psaki also said that Biden will not hesitate to discuss other "thorny" issues like the ransomware attacks attributed to Russian-based hackers and what she described as the incursion on the border of Ukraine.

"This is an opportunity to discuss all of these issues, but also where we can work together. Nuclear stability, negotiations with Iran - those are issues where we see an opportunity and a forum of working together," she 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.**

White House Adviser Says G7 Leaders Agreed to Endorse Biden's 15% Global Minimum Tax

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The G7 leaders have agreed to support US President Joe Biden's proposal for establishing a 15 percent global minimum tax, White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said.

"G7 leaders will endorse [Biden's] proposal for at least a 15 percent global minimum tax. America is rallying the world to make big multinational corporations pay their fair share so we can invest in our middle class at home," Sullivan said via Twitter.

6/11/2021 5:20:40 PM -04:00

Italy Breeze Past Turkey in Record-Breaking Euro 2020 Opener

MOSCOW, June 12 (Sputnik) - The Euro 2020 kicked off on Friday with the Italian national football team brushing Turkey aside with a 3-0 rout and setting a goal-scoring record in the process.

The first half ended in a draw with the few chances testing Turkish goalkeeper Ugurcan Cakir. The tournament's first score came by way of own-goal at the 53rd minute, when defender Merih Demiral failed to clear a cross.

Italian striker Ciro Immobile doubled his team's lead on the 66th minute. Lorenzo Insigne secured the host team's victory by netting another goal in the 79th minute.

Taking place in Rome's Stadio Olimpico to a crowd of 16,000 fans, the match became Italy's highest-scoring game in the modern era of the Euros. The Azzuri are otherwise renowned for playing defensive, physical and low-scoring 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.**

SPUTNIK TOP STORIES OF THE DAY

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik)

UKRAINE DEVELOPMENTS

\* A Ukrainian sabotage group on Friday attacked an observation post of the People's Militia of the self-proclaimed Luhansk People's Republic on Friday and killed five of its members, Ivan Filiponenko, an officer of the LPR people's militia, said.

\* Ukraine's NATO membership is not on the agenda, the German cabinet's spokeswoman, Ulrike Demmer, assured.

\* The venue of a meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Ukrainian counterpart, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has not yet been discussed, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said on Friday, adding that there have been contacts to agree on the agenda of such a meeting.

\* A meeting between US President Joe Biden and Zelenskyy, is planned for late July in Washington, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said.

\* The United States is providing Ukraine with another \$150-million package of military aid which includes counter-artillery radars and counter-unmanned aerial systems, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said.

#### CORONAVIRUS EPIDEMIC

\* The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is going to allow about 10 million doses of Johnson & Johnson's coronavirus vaccine to be distributed in the US or sent to other countries along with a warning notifying there is no guarantee the manufacturer Emergent BioSolutions followed good practices when producing them, the New York Times reported on Friday, citing sources familiar with the situation.

\* UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson met with his Canadian counterpart, Justin Trudeau, at the Group of Seven (G7) summit in Cornwall on Friday to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic and a variety of other topics on the bilateral and international agendas, including a prospective Free Trade Agreement.

#### BLINKEN-YANG CALL

\* US Secretary of State Antony Blinken during a phone call with his Chinese counterpart Yang Jiechi on Monday stressed the need for cooperation and transparency in the effort to identify the source of the COVID-19 virus, State Department Spokesperson Ned Price said on Friday.

\* Blinken held a telephone call with Yang Jiechi during which he shared the United States' concern about the situation in Hong Kong and urged Beijing to stop its alleged campaign against Taiwan, the State Department said.

#### PUTIN-BIDEN SUMMIT

\* Russian President Vladimir Putin is ready to participate in a joint press conference with US President Joe Biden after their summit next week, but is open to any alternatives, including holding a press conference on his own, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in an interview with CNN on Friday.

\* Putin will not discuss the issue of Alexey Navalny with US President Joe Biden at the upcoming summit next week, Peskov said.

\* If a suspicious aircraft is detected in the skies above Geneva, fighters will be scrambled, Pierre-Yves Eberle, the head of the Swiss Air Force's Operations Center, told 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.**

#### Canada Issues Non-Compliance Order to Pipeline Operator in Quebec - Statement

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - A pipeline operator has been hit with a non-compliance order for environmental violations at a Quebec facility, the Canada Energy Regulator (CER) said on Friday.

"We have issued an Inspection Officer Order to Trans Northern Pipelines Inc. for being out of compliance with safety and environment requirements at a deactivated facility at the Mirabel Meter Station located in Mirabel, Québec," CER said in a statement.

Trans Northern is being accused of violating four parts of the Canadian Energy Regulator Act, for not properly protecting and maintaining deactivated piping.

The operator will have to present a plan to come into compliance by August 31 and complete the work by December 31.

Trans Northern operates two underground pipelines in Canada - in the provinces of Alberta, Ontario and Quebec - that transport refined petroleum products such as gasoline, diesel, aviation and heating fuel.

**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.**

#### Putin Ready to Hold Joint Press Conference With Biden After Summit - Spokesman

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin is ready to participate in a joint press conference with US President Joe Biden after their summit next week, but is open to any alternatives, including holding a press conference on his own, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in an interview with CNN on Friday.

"We heard about such a possibility [to hold a joint press conference] from our American counterparts, but we are still waiting for final confirmation, but since the very beginning President Putin has been open to any alternatives," Peskov said when asked to comment about reports that there would not be a joint press conference after the summit.

The Kremlin's spokesman added that Putin was ready to participate in a joint press conference or hold one of his own in Geneva after the summit while the format of a potential conference is still being negotiated.

The summit will take place on Wednesday and is expected to be one of the central meetings of the US president during his trip to Europe. However, it remains to be seen whether the summit will yield improvements in the bilateral relations.

**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.**

#### Putin Does Not Plan to Discuss Navalny Case With Biden at Upcoming Summit - Spokesman

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Russian President Vladimir Putin will not discuss the issue of Alexey Navalny with US President Joe Biden at the upcoming summit next week, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told CNN in an interview on Friday.

"Well, there is nothing to discuss about it. There is nothing to discuss about this gentleman [Navalny]. He's in prison, and he is not a subject for the agenda of our bilateral relations,"

Peskov said when asked if the subject of Navalny will be raised at the summit.

Putin's goal at the meeting with Biden is to prevent further degradation of dialogue between Russia and the United States and the summit is the only way to accomplish it, the spokesman added.

The US-Russia summit is scheduled for Wednesday and will take place amid heightened tensions in relations between Moscow and Washington and ties have significantly deteriorated after the inauguration of Joe Biden in January.

**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.**

#### Pentagon Identifies 30 Service Members With Rare Heart Issue After COVID-19 Vaccine

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The US Defense Department has identified 30 cases of service members that suffered from a rare heart condition called myocarditis after receiving a dose of the mRNA-based Pfizer or Moderna vaccine for the novel coronavirus, Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby said on Friday.

Myocarditis is an inflammation of the heart muscle that is usually caused by a viral infection. A severe case could cause heart failure, abnormal heartbeat, or even death.

"We've identified approximately 30 cases of myocarditis among the more than 3.6 million doses that we've administered," Kirby said during a press briefing. "We take each one seriously and we're working closely with the CDC and other federal partners, academic medical professionals as well, to ensure we evaluate all cases consistently."

The Defense Department remains confident in the vaccines and continues to encourage the public to take them, Kirby said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Thursday said it would convene an emergency meeting on June 18 to discuss rare but higher-than expected numbers of people suffering from myocarditis after receiving doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines.

The CDC said that as of May 31, there have been some 226 cases of people with myocarditis and pericarditis after getting a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. A majority have recovered, but 15 are still hospitalized, and three are in the intensive care unit.

The number of myocarditis cases is small compared to the 139 million Americans that have been fully vaccinated.

**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 Gives Ukraine New Package of Military Aid Worth \$150Mln - Pentagon

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The United States is providing Ukraine with another \$150-million package of military aid which includes counter-artillery radars and counter-unmanned aerial systems, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby told reporters on Friday. "Today, the [Defense] Department is announcing a new \$150-million package as part of the Ukraine security assistance initiative to help Ukraine's forces preserve their country's territorial integrity and to improve interoperability with NATO," Kirby said during a briefing.

The package includes two counter-artillery radars, counter-unmanned aerial systems, secure communications gear, electronic warfare and military medical evacuation equipment. The US will also supply training and equipment to improve the operational safety and capacity of Ukrainian Air Force bases, according to the Defense Department.

"It will complement the \$125 million package announced back in March," Kirby said. The previous package included armed Mark VI patrol boats, counter-artillery radars, tactical equipment, and support for a satellite imagery.

Kirby said the United States would continue to provide security assistance to Ukraine, including lethal weapons.

The United States has committed more than \$2.5 billion in security assistance to Ukraine since 2014 and offers continued help with reforms "to advance its Euro-Atlantic aspirations," he 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 to Nominate Cuban-Born Ex-Commander for Navy Chief - White House

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - President Joe Biden named retired naval commander Carlos Del Toro as his nominee for US Navy Secretary, the White House said on Friday. "Biden announced his intent to nominate... Carlos Del Toro... for Secretary of the Navy," the White House said in a statement. "Carlos Del Toro is a retired Commander in the US Navy with nearly 40 years' experience in national security and naval operations, budgeting, and acquisition."

Born in Havana, Cuba, the release added, Del Toro immigrated to the United States with his family as refugees in 1962.

As founder of SBG Technology Solutions, he has supported Navy programs, including shipbuilding, AI, cybersecurity and space systems, 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.**

### Pentagon Returning \$2Bln From Trump Border Wall to Military Construction - Spokesman

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The US Defense Department is redirecting \$2.2 billion the Trump administration took away from the military to build new border wall and using it for other construction projects this year, Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby said on Friday.

"In accordance with President Biden's January 20th proclamation, the department has developed a plan for redirecting funds and repurposing contracts that are connected with the border barrier construction...the Deputy Secretary [of Defense Kathleen Hicks] today has approved a plan to use the \$2.2 billion in unobligated military construction funds that were previously made available for border barrier construction," Kirby said during a press briefing. The funds will support 66 military construction projects in 11 US states, 16 countries, and three territories, Kirby said.

The Trump administration redirected some \$2.5 billion in military funds to build the wall on the US-Mexico border, but the mission was blocked by lengthy court battles.

The Trump administration was able to construct 400 miles of the large steel wall structure despite lengthy court battles and opposition from Democrats in Congress.

**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.**

Huawei CFO Meng Files Application for Publication Ban HSBC Documents from Hong Kong

TORONTO, June 11 (Sputnik) - Huawei CFO Meng Wanzhou has filed an application to ban the publication of documents obtained from HSBC in Hong Kong, court documents revealed on Friday.

In April, the High Court of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ordered HSBC, which Meng is alleged by the US Justice Department to have defrauded, to release additional documents to the executive's defense team and to Canadian government prosecutors representing the Attorney General of Canada and the United States.

"The Applicant respectfully requests that the contents of the HSBC Disclosure be protected by a publication ban in order to uphold the terms of the Agreed Schedule and preserve the administration of justice," the court filing said.

Meng's legal team maintains that the publication ban is necessary to protect HSBC's business practices and employees and encourage the Bank to participate in the legal process.

Meng, the daughter of Huawei founder and CEO Ren Zhengfei, was arrested on December 1, 2018 at Vancouver International Airport during a layover stop at the request of the US government. She is wanted by US authorities for her alleged role in violating sanctions against Iran. The Justice Department alleges that Meng committed financial transgressions by misleading multinational financial conglomerate, HSBC, into approving more than \$100 million in transactions that contravened US sanctions on Iran from 2010 to 2014.

Meng remains under house arrest in Vancouver, although is free to traverse the region in the company of state-imposed guards outside of her 11:00 p.m to 6:00 a.m. curfew.

**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.**

#### Pentagon Says Monitoring 2 Iranian Naval Ships in Atlantic

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The US military is monitoring two Iranian naval ships on their voyage in the Atlantic, but would not speculate on the purpose of the deployment, the Pentagon spokesman John Kirby told reporters on Friday.

"We are monitoring this deployment of these two ships... Questions should be put to leaders in Tehran about what their intent is," Kirby said during a briefing.

Earlier this week, Politico quoted unnamed officials as saying that the US administration is urging countries in the Latin America region, including Venezuela and Cuba, to turn away these ships.

According to the report, the US intelligence community has evidence that one of the ships is carrying fast-attack boats that are likely intended to be sold to Venezuela.

**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.**

#### Atlantic Charter 'Pure Window Dressing,' UK Already in Lockstep With US - Ex-British Envoy

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The new Atlantic Charter announced by President Joe Biden and UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is only for show and will make no difference whatsoever given London already walks in lockstep with Washington, former British ambassador Peter Ford told Sputnik.

On Thursday, Biden and Johnson unveiled what they dubbed the "New Atlantic Charter," reaffirming commitments set out 80 years ago to boost cooperation against common adversaries.

"I see this as pure window dressing. The UK already marches in lockstep with the US," Ford said. "This new agreement will make no difference."

Besides, Ford said, US-UK cooperation proceeds mainly by stealth, away from the public gaze, in areas of loosely defined "security."

In the charter, the two leaders also declared their commitment to keeping NATO "a nuclear alliance." The framework, they said, will promote responsible state behavior in cyberspace and arms control to reduce the risks of international conflict.

The original Atlantic Charter was signed by UK Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the dawn of World War II.

Ford was UK ambassador to Bahrain and Syria before joining the United Nations to work on refugee issues. He also served in Beirut, Cairo, Riyadh, Singapore and Paris as a UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) diplomat.

**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 Justice Department to Double Civil Rights Division Enforcement Staff - AG Garland

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The US Justice Department will be doubling the size of its civil rights division's enforcement staff, Attorney General Merrick Garland said on Friday.

"So again, the civil rights division is going to need more lawyers. Accordingly, today I am announcing that within the next 30 days we will double the division's enforcement staff for protecting the right to vote," Garland said.

He added that the division will use provisions in the Voting Rights Act, the National Voter Registration Act, the Help America Vote Act, and the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act to protect all Americans' right to vote.

Additionally, Garland said that the DOJ's civil rights division will be scrutinizing new legislation that may inhibit voter access, and will not hesitate to act should they find any new measures to be in violation of the law.

**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 Aware Russia Plans to Supply Iran With Advanced Satellite System - State Dept.

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The United States is aware of Russia's plans to supply Iran with an advanced satellite system but is not ready to provide any comments, US State Department spokesperson Jalina Porter said in a press briefing on Friday.

On Thursday, the Washington Post reported that Russia is in the midst of delivering to Iran an advanced Earth observation satellite Kanopus-V equipped with a high-resolution camera as it was agreed by Iranian and Russian companies in 2015.

"We are aware of it and, of course, following these [Washington Post] media reports about Russia potentially providing Iran with an advanced satellite system. Other than that we have nothing further to announce at this point, we don't have any responses or any potential responses if you will," Porter said.

The fact that Iran will obtain equipment of this quality has raised concerns among the US and its allies who already consider it as a potential threat to their military positions across the Middle East region, the newspaper reported.

**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 Gives Ukraine New Package of Military Aid Worth \$150Mln – Pentagon

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) – The United States is providing Ukraine with another \$150-million package of military aid which includes counter-artillery radars and unmanned aerial vehicles, Pentagon spokesman John Kirby told reporters on Friday.

“Today the Department is announcing a new \$150-million package as part of the Ukraine security assistance initiative to help Ukraine’s forces preserve their country’s territorial integrity and to improve interoperability with NATO,” Kirby said during a briefing.

The package includes capabilities such as two counter-artillery radars, some unmanned aerial systems and secure communications. “It will complement the \$125 million package announced back in March,” Kirby said.

He added that the United States would continue to provide security assistance to Ukraine, including lethal weapons.

**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.**

#### Twenty-Three US State Attorneys General Ask Supreme Court to Extend Ban on Evictions

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The attorneys general representing 22 US states and the District of Columbia have filed a motion asking the US Supreme Court to extend a federal ban on evictions due to COVID-19 that is to expire on June 30.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) mooted the moratorium on evictions last year at the height of the coronavirus pandemic, and the Trump administration embraced the move. The Biden administration has expressed hope that the order will be extended.

The 23 attorneys general said in the petition that a continued ban on evictions was necessary “to prevent the forced displacement of vulnerable residents and limit the spread of COVID-19 across state lines.”

According to the US government, up to 40 million American renters are at risk of eviction and at least 4 million are at “imminent risk.”

Earlier this year, a coalition of property owners, property managers, and trade associations filed a lawsuit seeking to dissolve the moratorium, threatening to trigger an unprecedented wave of evictions in states and local communities that lack their own protections for tenants.

Following that lawsuit, the US District Court for the District of Columbia made a preliminary ruling on May 5 that the CDC had overstepped its authority in imposing the eviction moratorium. But the court also stayed its decision on the moratorium itself, keeping it in place pending appeal to prevent harm to renters.

In their support of the CDC, the state attorneys general urged the US Supreme Court to leave the stay in place, arguing that an immediate dissolution of the moratorium would force millions of vulnerable individuals from their homes into the streets, into crowded shelters, or into contact with family and friends within or across state lines in the midst of a 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.**

#### UPDATE - US Justice Dept. Attorney General Announces Will Review Lawmakers' Data Seizure

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Justice Department (DOJ) Inspector General Michael Horowitz announced on Friday that his office will review a Trump-era investigation that involved the seizure of Democratic lawmakers' data.

"The DOJ Office of the Inspector General is initiating a review of DOJ's use of subpoenas and other legal authorities to obtain communication records of Members of Congress and affiliated persons, and the news media in connection with recent investigations of alleged unauthorized disclosures of information to the media by government officials," Horowitz said.

The news comes after reports emerged that Trump's Justice Department subpoenaed Apple for metadata of Democrats on the US House Intelligence Committee, their staff and family members as part of an investigation into leaks of information on contacts between Russia and Trump associates.

Horowitz said the review will examine the Justice Department's compliance with applicable policies and procedures as well as whether the use of subpoenas or the investigations were done improperly, but may consider other issues as well.

US Senators Chuck Schumer and Dick Durbin, both Democrats, characterized the revelations as shocking, a gross abuse of power and an assault on the separation of powers. The senators called on the former heads of the Justice Department, William Barr and Jeff Sessions, to testify on the matter under oath.

**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.**

#### Teenage Girl Who Filmed George Floyd Killing by Police Wins Special Pulitzer Award

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Darnella Frazer, the teenage girl who filmed the video of African-American George Floyd being choked to death by police officers, won a special citation in the Pulitzer Prize awards of 2021, the awarding committee announced at Columbia University in New York City on Friday.

The committee said it awarded Frazer a special citation "for courageously recording the murder of George Floyd, a video that spurred protests against police brutality around the world, highlighting the crucial role of citizens in journalists' quest for truth and justice."

The Associated Press and the New York Times each won two prizes. The Associated Press' awards were for photographs of the COVID-19 pandemic's toll in Spain and the riots protesting Floyd's killing in Minneapolis.

The New York Times won awards in the categories of public service for tracing the course of the COVID-19 pandemic and exposing racial and economic inequalities and government failures and for cultural criticism to Wesley Morris who wrote for the paper on the intersection of race and culture in America.

**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 Deputy Attorney General Asks Watchdog to Investigate Lawmakers' Data Seizure - Reports

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - US Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco has asked the Justice Department to launch an investigation into a leak of information probed by the Trump administration that involved the seizure of lawmakers' data, CNN reported on Friday. The news comes after reports emerged that the Justice Department under president Donald Trump subpoenaed Apple to obtain metadata of Democrats on the US House Intelligence Committee, including their staff and family members as part of an investigation into leaks that led to stories about Russia and Trump's associates. Senators Chuck Schumer and Dick Durbin said the revelation the Trump Justice Department secretly subpoenaed metadata is shocking, and represents a gross abuse of power and an assault on the separation of powers, the report said. The senators also called on the former heads of the Justice Department, William Barr and Jeff Sessions, to testify on the matter under oath.

**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 Urges Ethiopian Politicians to Commit to Inclusive Post-Election Dialogue - State Dept.

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The United States is urging Ethiopian politicians to reject violence ahead of upcoming elections on June 21 and resolve all grievances through dialogue, US State Department spokesperson Ned Price said on Friday. "We urge politicians and community leaders to reject violence and to refrain from inciting others," Price said. "All political actors and community leaders should seek to resolve grievances through negotiation, dialogue, and recognized non-violent dispute resolution mechanisms." Price said the United States also calls on the government and all Ethiopians to commit to an inclusive, post-election political dialogue to determine a path forward to strengthen democracy and national unity. However, the spokesperson expressed grave concerns about current environment in Ethiopia. "The detention of opposition politicians, harassment of independent media, partisan activities by local and regional governments, and the many interethnic and inter-communal conflicts across Ethiopia are obstacles to a free and fair electoral process and whether Ethiopians would perceive them as credible," he said. "The exclusion of large segments of the electorate from this contest due to security issues and internal displacement is particularly troubling."

**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.**

#### Teenage Girl Who Filmed George Floyd Killing by Police Wins Special Pulitzer Award

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - Darnella Frazer, the teenage girl who filmed the video of African-American George Floyd being choked to death by police officers as he begged for mercy, won a special citation in the Pulitzer Prize awards of 2021, the awarding committee announced at Columbia University in New York City on Friday.

The committee said it awarded Frazer a special citation "for courageously recording the murder of George Floyd, a video that spurred protests against police brutality around the world, highlighting the crucial role of citizens in journalists' quest for truth and justice."

**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.**

#### Brazil, 4 Other States Elected to Join UN Security Council for 2-Year Term - President

UNITED NATIONS, June 11 (Sputnik) - Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were on Friday elected to serve as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council for a two-year term starting in January, UN General Assembly President Volkan Bozkir said.

"Having obtained the record two-thirds majority and the largest number of votes, Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the [UAE] are elected members of the United Nations Security Council for a two-year term, beginning on January 1, 2022," Bozkir said after the vote held earlier in the day by the UN General Assembly.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo was also running but did not obtain the required two-thirds majority of votes among the 193 member states of the UN General Assembly.

The final tally of the vote showed that Ghana received 185 votes, Gabon received 183 votes, the UAE received 179 votes, Albania received with 175 votes and Brazil received with 181 votes to become non-permanent members for the 2022-2023 period.

The UN Security Council is comprised of the total of 15 member states: five permanent and ten non-permanent states rotating among different regional blocs every two years. China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States, as the victors of the Second World War, occupy a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

**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 33,000 Children in Ethiopia's Tigray Region at Risk of Death From Famine - UNICEF

UNITED NATIONS, June 11 (Sputnik) - The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that 33,000 children from Ethiopian region of Tigray are at risk of dying from severe malnutrition and lack of clean water amid the ongoing conflict there, UNICEF spokesperson James Elder said on Friday.

"Without humanitarian access to scale up our response, an estimated 33,000 severely malnourished children in currently inaccessible areas in Tigray are at high risk of death," Elder said during a press briefing. "Increasingly, the crisis is one not only of food insecurity but also of clean water, sanitation and health care - especially disease prevention and treatment."

Elder said the current food crisis in Ethiopia resulted in the largest number of people classified as being in catastrophic food insecurity conditions in a decade since the Somalia famine in 2010-2011.

The spokesperson proposed declaring a famine in Tigray even though the formal threshold calls of 20 percent of the population has not been reached yet.

On Thursday, United Nations analysis showed that more than 350,000 people in the Tigray region are experiencing famine.

**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.**

**Blinken Congratulates Mongolia on Successful Election, Vows to Work With President-Elect**

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken congratulated Mongolia on the success of the presidential election and said the United States is proud to be "the third neighbor" to the country which borders Russia and China.

"The United States congratulates the people and government of Mongolia for their successful presidential election on June 9... We commend Mongolia for its commitment to democracy, and we are proud to be Mongolia's "third neighbor" and strategic partner," Blinken said in a statement.

Blinken said the United States look forward to working with Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh, the ruling Mongolian People's Party, candidate won the race with around 67 percent of the vote.

The election was the eighth presidential vote in Mongolia since 1990.

**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.**

**FDA to Allow Distribution of 10M In J&J Vaccines With Contamination Warning - Reports**

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is going to allow about 10 million doses of the Johnson & Johnson's coronavirus vaccine to be distributed in the United States or sent to other countries along with a warning that there is no guarantee the manufacturer Emergent BioSolutions followed good practices when producing them, the New York Times reported on Friday.

The FDA has also ordered Johnson & Johnson to discard 60 million of its single-dose COVID-19 vaccines produced at the currently closed plant in Baltimore. The US drug regulator ordered the move due to the risks of the doses being contaminated as a result of an accident in late March at the Baltimore plant operated by Emergent BioSolutions, the report said citing sources familiar with the situation.

Later on Friday, FDA confirmed that it plans to authorize the distribution of two batches of Johnson & Johnson vaccines in the United States and overseas and noted that it is not yet ready to include the Emergent BioSolutions plant into a list of the authorized vaccines manufacturing facilities.

FDA also confirmed that any export of the vaccines produced by Emergent BioSolutions for Johnson & Johnson will be conducted under condition that appropriate relevant information about manufacture process will be shared with the health regulators in the countries where the vaccines will be used.

On April 5, Johnson & Johnson admitted to having produced a faulty batch of coronavirus vaccines at the East Baltimore facility owned by Emergent BioSolutions reportedly due to a mix-up of two ingredients that led to the ruining of about 15 million doses.

**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.**

McDonald's Halts Personal Data Breach in South Korea, Taiwan

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The fast food restaurant chain McDonald's identified and contained unauthorized activity on its network that put the personal information of employees and customers at risk, the company told Sputnik on Friday.

"While we were able to close off access quickly after identification, our investigation has determined that a small number of files were accessed, some of which contained personal data. Based on our investigation, only Korea and Taiwan had customer personal data accessed, and they will be taking steps to notify regulators and customers listed in these files," McDonald's said in a statement.

McDonald's pointed out that no customer payment information was contained in the breached files while several markets will be taking steps to address files that contained the personal data of employees.

The also said it has company conducted an investigation in conjunction with experienced third parties to determine the extent of the breach and plans on leveraging the findings of the investigation to enhance their existing cybersecurity measures.

**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 FDA to Allow Distribution of 10Mln J&J Vaccines With Contamination Warning - Reports

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) – The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is going to allow about 10 million doses of Johnson & Johnson's (J&J) COVID-19 vaccine to be distributed in the US or sent to other countries along with a warning notifying there is no guarantee the manufacturer Emergent BioSolutions followed good practices when producing them, the New York Times reported on Friday, citing sources familiar with the situation.

The FDA has also ordered Johnson & Johnson to discard 60 million of its single-dose COVID-19 vaccines produced at the currently closed plant in Baltimore. The US drug regulator ordered the move due to the risks of the doses being contaminated as a result of an accident in late March at the Baltimore plant operated by Emergent BioSolutions, the report 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, Japan Launch New Global Joint Clean Energy Climate Partnership - State Dept.

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - The United States and Japan have launched a new global partnership to promote clean energy around the world that President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Suga Yoshihide agreed on two months ago, the US State Department said on Friday. "The United States and Japan held the first Japan-US Clean Energy Partnership (JUCEP) meeting on June 10, chaired by the Department of State and the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, the State Department said in a media note.

At the April 16 US-Japan Summit Meeting, Biden and Yoshihide launched the program to contribute to green growth, advance shared climate goals under the Paris Agreement and help achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions globally by 2050, the note said.

The partnership will focus on renewable energy, power grid modernization, including grid stability, energy management technology and transmission and nuclear energy, the note added. The partnership will also promote decarbonization technologies such as carbon recycling and other abatement technologies, as well as advanced fuels like ammonia and hydrogen, according to the note.

**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.**

NBC to Air Exclusive Interview With Putin Ahead of US-Russia Summit - Statement

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - NBC News said on Friday that it interviewed Russian President Vladimir Putin ahead of his meeting with US counterpart Joe Biden and plans to air the interview on Monday.

"NBC News' Keir Simmons sat down with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow for a worldwide exclusive one-on-one interview airing Monday, June 14 across NBC News' TODAY, NBC Nightly News, and throughout the day on MSNBC," the channel said.

The preview will be shown at 6:30 p.m. ET on Friday.

NBC said that this is Putin's first television interview with a US broadcaster in nearly three years. The Russian and US presidents are set to meet in Switzerland next Wednesday to discuss the totality of the relationship between their countries.

**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.**

#### **Iran Makes Payment to Restore Voting Rights at UN General Assembly - President**

UNITED NATIONS, June 11 (Sputnik) - Iran made a partial payment toward the United Nations budget that allowed the country to restore its voting rights at the UN General Assembly, the body's President Volkan Bozkir said in a meeting on Friday.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter," Bozkir said ahead of the Assembly's vote to elect five non-permanent members of the UN Security Council for a two-year term.

Article 19 indicates that a United Nations member state whose arrears equal or exceed the amount of contributions due for the preceding two full years loses its voting rights in the General Assembly.

As of last Wednesday, Iran owed the United Nations \$16.2 million, according to the letter circulated by Bozkir and UN chief Antonio Guterres.

Tehran said it was behind on payments because of the US sanctions imposed by former President Donald Trump's administration upon Washington's decision to abandon the nuclear agreement with Iran in 2018.

Besides Iran, the Central African Republic, Somalia, Comoros and Sao Tome and Principe are also currently in arrears on paying their dues to the UN budget.

**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.**

#### **Blinken Presses China's Yang for Transparency from Beijing on COVID Origins - State Dept.**

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken during a phone call with his Chinese counterpart Yang Jiechi on Monday stressed the need for cooperation and transparency in the effort to identify the source of the COVID-19 virus, State Department Spokesperson Ned Price said on Friday.

"Addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretary stressed the importance of cooperation and transparency regarding the origin of the virus, including the need for WHO Phase 2 expert-led studies in China," Price said in a readout of the call between the two top diplomats.

**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.**

## Blinken in Call With China's Top Diplomat Raises Concerns About Hong Kong, Taiwan

WASHINGTON, June 11 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken held a telephone call with his Chinese counterpart Yang Jiechi during which he shared the United States' concern about the situation in Hong Kong and urged Beijing to stop its alleged campaign against Taiwan, the State Department said on Friday.

"The Secretary underscored the US concern over the deterioration of democratic norms in Hong Kong and the ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity against predominantly Muslim Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in Xinjiang. He also called on Beijing to cease its pressure campaign against Taiwan and peacefully resolve cross-Strait issues," the State Department said in a release.