

9/1/22 Thursday

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.

Ethiopia Accuses TPLF of New Attack on Western Tigray as Insurgent Group Claims Eritrean Invasion

By - Fantine Gardinier

In another round of confusing back-and-forth accusations, the Ethiopian federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the governing force in Tigray state, have both claimed the other side has launched a new attack in western Tigray.

A day after the Ethiopian government accused the TPLF of beginning a new westward drive toward the Sudanese border, the TPLF has accused Ethiopia and Eritrea of launching an invasion of its territory in almost the same area.

"The TPLF clique, which cannot survive without war, has launched an invasion in the direction of Wag, Wolqait, and our border areas with Sudan," Ethiopia's Federal Communications Service said on Wednesday.

The area in question is formally a western part of Tigray state, although only because when the TPLF took power in Ethiopia in 1991, they annexed parts of Amhara state into Tigray, including the four westernmost districts. The Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) has remained in control of those districts throughout the two-year-long war with the TPLF that began with a TPLF sneak attack on ENDF forces in Mekelle in November 2020.

That, too, is [claimed by both sides](#) to have been perpetrated by the other side.

The offensive is in keeping with trends reported inside Tigray in recent weeks, pointing to a massive shifting of men and materiel along the B30 highway in the west, and the A2 in the east, prior to the outbreak of hostilities on August 24.

TPLF Claims Eritrea Re-Entered War

On Thursday, the TPLF levied its own accusations in western Tigray, claiming that the ENDF had positioned forces inside Eritrea and launched a "joint" invasion near Adyabo.

"The enemy has begun a massive offensive towards Adyabo in four directions. The centerpiece of the enemy's offensive consists of attacks from Fiqya Gebre to Ademeyti; from Selamo to Sheraro; from Gobo Tsin'at to Adi Aser and Irdi Mathias; and from Adi Goshu to Adi Aser," the Tigray Military Command said in the statement.

"The enemy, having already relocated a massive military force to Eritrea, has now begun a joint campaign with the foreign invading force of Eritrea to brutalize and exterminate the people of Tigray," it added.

As [Reuters noted](#), verifying the TPLF's accusations is nearly impossible, although there has been some fighting near Sheraro in the past, including a brief [break in the ceasefire in May](#) when Eritrean artillery killed several people in the town and the TPLF responded with attacks that it said killed 300 soldiers.

When the TPLF was in power in Addis Ababa, it waged a 20-year war against Eritrea that killed roughly 100,000 Eritreans. When Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed came to power in 2018,

marking an end to TPLF rule, he immediately [made peace with Eritrean](#) President Isaias Afwerki, for which he won a Nobel Peace Prize. Their newfound alliance meant that when the TPLF launched its attack on the ENDF in November 2020, it also attacked Eritrea, firing ballistic missiles at the capital of Asmara and several other cities.

In an [interview in January](#) with Eritrean television following the ceasefire with the TPLF, Afwerki seemed to indicate a willingness to intervene in Ethiopia again if its stability were threatened. “[D]evelopments in every country in this region affect Eritrea, but relatively speaking, Ethiopian developments affect us even more directly, which is why we remain committed to its stability and its people’s wellbeing,” he said.

Thursday [comments on Twitter](#) by Eritrea’s ambassador to Kenya, Beyene Russom, also seemed to indicate that Eritrean forces were involved in fighting in Tigray.

Calling the TPLF attack a “mistake,” he said it “won’t have a chance to make another mistake,” adding: “Victory to the Eritrean Defense Forces and the people of Eritrea is inevitable.”

Five Months of Peace Ended

Since hostilities were renewed on August 24, TPLF forces have advanced southward into Amhara state along the A2 highway corridor, seizing the town of Kobo and threatening the larger, regional hub of Woldiya. Fighting was also reported in nearby areas of the countryside, and TPLF forces also invaded adjacent parts of Afar state to the east.

The group said the advances were part of a “counteroffensive” after a weak Ethiopian attack along their southern front. However, it also came shortly after the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) [accused the TPLF of stealing](#) 570,000 liters of fuel intended to power its cargo trucks that are bringing food aid into Tigray.

In a statement, the TPLF didn’t deny taking the gasoline but said it was collecting on a debt owed to them by the WFP. The UN agency has [since suspended aid](#) to Tigray, where more than 5 million people are reported as being on the verge of famine.

The attack came after five months of peace, and just as peace talks were slated to begin. After weeks of back-and-forth about conditions, Abiy’s government agreed to [meet the TPLF’s demands](#) for restoring basic services to Tigray and to hold the talks in Kenya, with the expectation that the TPLF would come to the table and talk about an indefinite ceasefire and a serious peace settlement. However, days later, the hostilities resumed.

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.

Ginni Thomas, Wife of SCOTUS Justice, Also Pressed Wisconsin to Overturn 2020 Election - Report

By - Fantine Gardinier

Newly revealed emails show that Virginia “Ginni” Thomas, the wife of conservative US Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, didn’t just press Arizona lawmakers to overturn the results of the November 2020 US presidential election - she did the same thing in Wisconsin, too.

According to [The Washington Post](#), which viewed lawmakers’ emails obtained by the watchdog group Documented under a state public records law, Thomas’ effort in the Badger State was

minuscule compared to Arizona, where she [emailed 29 Arizona lawmakers](#) in November and December 2020.

By contrast, Thomas reached out to just two Wisconsin lawmakers: state Sen. Kathy Bernier, then head of the Wisconsin Senate elections committee, and state Rep. Gary Tauchen, both of whom received identical emails on November 9.

"Please stand strong in the face of media and political pressure," the emails said. Two days earlier, the [Associated Press unofficially called](#) Democratic candidate Joe Biden as the winner of the November 3, having waited for several days to see the results of absentee ballots that trickled in as well as several recounts.

"Please reflect on the awesome authority granted to you by our Constitution. And then please take action to ensure that a clean slate of Electors is chosen for our state," Thomas' email added.

Bernier told The Post she had not even realized Thomas had emailed her until Documented identified the message.

While [Tauchen has pushed legislation](#) that would have changed how Wisconsin selected its Electoral College delegates in a way that would have yielded more of the state's 10 electoral votes to Trump instead of Biden, Bernier took a stand against investigations like those Thomas was pushing.

Speaking about a GOP-backed investigation of Wisconsin's 2020 election pushed by Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, [Bernier said in December 2021](#) that "It keeps jazzing up the people who think they know what they're talking about, and they don't. The longer we keep this up, the more harm we're going to do for Republicans."

"There's been recount after recount, court case after court case and, at some point, I wish he would come out and say, you know, I accept the results," she told [Wisconsin Public Radio](#) the following month, when she decided not to seek re-election. "Not only for the greater good of the Republican Party, but the greater good of the United States."

'Stop the Steal'

Even before the November 3, 2020 election, Trump was already predicting that widespread voter fraud would result from the use of millions of mail-in ballots that many US states adopted in an effort to avoid turning Election Day into a "superspreader event" amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which had begun that March and already killed 216,000 Americans, [according to health data](#).

As mail-in ballots trickled in for days after Election Day, they triggered several reversals and recounts that turned the tide of ballots against Trump, who claimed the changes were the result of fraud by Democrats, and he refused to recognize the results of the election. Throughout November and December, Trump and his supporters mounted one challenge after another in battleground states attempting to overturn the results of ballot counts that showed Biden as the victor.

The movement culminated in the January 6, 2021 breach of the US Capitol, which immediately followed a ["Stop the Steal" rally](#) hosted by Trump outside the White House. Thousands of Trump's supporters stormed the national legislature and temporarily dispersed Congress, which had been in the process of certifying the results of the Electoral College vote that legally determines the victor of US presidential elections.

The rioters' efforts failed and they were soon driven from the building by police and National Guard troops, who garrisoned Washington, DC, for months afterward.

After the attack, several US lawmakers who had previously opposed certifying the election results, such as then-US Sen. Kelly Loeffler, were [visibly shaken](#) by the events and turned against the president, while others have remained [defiantly supportive](#). Trump has maintained his position that he did not legally lose the election.

The US House of Representatives voted to impeach Trump on charges of inciting the insurrection, but in a trial that occurred weeks after he left office, Trump was acquitted by a minority of senators.

'Help This Great President'

Ginni Thomas' political activism on behalf of the Republican Party and Trump has raised more than a few eyebrows, given her marriage to a Supreme Court justice who is supposed to remain strictly nonpartisan. She claims they keep their professional lives separate.

That activism has included not just messaging Arizona and Wisconsin lawmakers in Trump's defense, but also coordinating her efforts with Trump's then-chief of staff, Mark Meadows, and [Trump's campaign lawyer](#), John Eastman. Text messages between Meadows and Thomas were [obtained by the media in March](#) after he provided them to the House committee investigating the insurrection.

"Help This Great President stand firm, Mark!!!" said one text from Thomas sent on November 10, 2020. "You are the leader, with him, who is standing for America's constitutional governance at the precipice. The majority knows Biden and the Left is attempting the greatest Heist of our History."

However, Justice Thomas has also sided with Trump. In a [January 2022 ruling](#) on a request by Trump to block the House committee from gaining access to White House records sought as part of its investigation, Thomas was the lone dissenter on the nine-justice high court, voting to block access.

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.

'Equality is Not Within Reach': UN Human Rights Expert Blasts US Record on LGBTQ Rights
By - Fantine Gardinier

More than 200 bills attacking LGBTQ rights have been introduced in US state legislatures in 2022, by far the most of any year, according to a count by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a nationwide LGBTQ rights advocacy group.

A [new report by a United Nations](#) expert has called attention to the deplorable state of LGBTQ rights in the United States, despite the Biden administration's emphasis on formalistic displays of visibility and statements of solidarity.

"Despite five decades of progress, equality is not within reach, and often not even within sight, for all persons impacted by violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in the United States," Victor Madrigal-Borloz, the UN Independent Expert on protection

against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, said in a [report published on Tuesday](#).

"I am deeply alarmed by a widespread, profoundly negative riptide created by deliberate actions to roll back the human rights of LGBT people at the state level," said Madrigal-Borloz, a Costa Rican lawyer who took the UN job in 2018.

He noted "deeply discriminatory measures seeking to rebuild stigma" against LGBTQ people, including limiting sexual education, access to [gender-affirming treatment](#), and the ability of [trans people to play sports](#) of their gender or access public facilities for their gender.

"The evidence shows that, without exception, these actions rely on prejudiced and stigmatizing views of LGBT persons, in particular transgender children and youth, and seek to leverage their lives as props for political profit," he said.

Attacks Push LGBTQ People Into Poverty

Madrigal-Borloz's report was based on a 10-day visit to Washington, DC; Birmingham, Alabama; Miami, Florida; and San Diego, California. In each place, he met with state officials and members of civil society who shared their experiences and life stories with him.

He noted that in particular, two of the most vulnerable groups of people, LGBTQ persons of color and LGBTQ asylum seekers at the US-Mexico border, continued to face exceptional inequalities and dangers as a consequence of discrimination against them.

The impact of this discrimination is substantial. LGBTQ people experience substantially higher [rates of poverty](#), homelessness, and violence than their straight counterparts, as well as lower pay than their colleagues. A [McKinsey study published](#) in late 2021 found that transgender women make just 60% of the wages that their cisgender counterparts make in the same positions, even when the trans women have higher educational achievement.

A [study by the Trevor Project](#) in 2021 also found that LGBTQ youth are more than four times as likely to attempt suicide than their peers, and that the [attempted suicide rate](#) for trans youth who don't receive affirming social treatment or medical care is over 50%. When they do receive affirming care, the number drops to single digits.

According to the HRC, [more than 200 bills](#) seeking to limit the rights of LGBTQ people have been introduced in US state legislatures in 2022 - the most of any year - and many have passed into law. In other situations, such as in Texas, Florida, and South Dakota, issues that their conservative governors could not get bills passed on were instead implemented by executive order, [circumventing the democratic process](#) to ensure unequal treatment of LGBTQ people.

Biden Praised, But Moves Are Few

Madrigal-Borloz praised the Biden administration, claiming it had "adopted powerful and meaningful actions" in line with international human rights law, as well as "a thoughtful strategy" for confronting the attacks.

"In light of a concerted attack to undermine these actions, I exhort the administration to redouble its efforts to support the human rights of all LGBT persons living under its jurisdiction, and helping them to safe waters," he said.

Biden has made numerous symbolic appointments of LGBTQ figures to his government, including Transportation Secretary [Pete Buttigieg](#), Assistant Secretary for Health [Rachel Levine](#), and White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre. He also reversed several anti-LGBTQ orders dating to the Trump administration on his first day in office, and pledged to pass the Equality Act within the first 100 days of his presidency.

However, almost two years later, the Equality Act continues to languish in the Senate, unable to get past a 60-vote filibuster blocking its passage. Republicans have used the rule to block much of Biden's ambitious legislative agenda, and he has faced wide pressure from his own party to [bypass the rule](#), which is not derived from the US Constitution's rules about congressional procedure. He has so far been reluctant to do so.

Foreign Policy Weapon

The contradiction is significant, given how in foreign policy the US has postured in recent years as a leader in LGBTQ rights and a defender of them around the globe. It has cynically used the issue to build domestic support for attacking other nations, including Russia, Iran, and China. "There will be no ambiguity," a senior Biden administration official [told the media](#) in February 2021. "This is not the word of one envoy or cabinet secretary. Biden wants this to be seen as the policy of the United States government. This administration prioritizes LGBTQ rights as human rights."

Meanwhile, some of those countries, such as Cuba and China, have continued to make advances in LGBTQ rights. Last month, Cuba prepared to [vote on a new constitution](#) that enshrines the right to same-gender marriage, and [Shanghai opened its first health clinic](#) for trans youth last year.

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

Biden: Trump, MAGA Republicans 'Represent Extremism' That Threaten 'Very Foundation of Our Republic'

Biden's Thursday address largely echoed the same message he used ahead of the 2020 presidential election, one in which he called for Americans to stand for democracy in the face of extremism.

US President Joe Biden blasted his predecessor and Republicans within the "Make America Great Again" (MAGA) movement late Thursday, calling them a threat to the "very foundation" of US democracy.

"Equality and democracy are under assault," Biden said during a primetime address in Pennsylvania. "Too much of what's happening in our country today is not normal."

"Trump and MAGA Republicans represent the extremism that threatens the very foundation of our republic ... MAGA Republicans don't respect the Constitution, the rule of law, or the will of the people," he stressed.

However, Biden did note as a sidebar that "not even the majority of Republicans" are in fact MAGA Republicans. "Not all embrace their extremist ideology," he said.

The president's primetime address went on to hammer MAGA Republicans, with Biden saying the group promotes authoritarian leaders, fans the flames of violence and refuses to believe in "the will of the people."

"MAGA forces are determined to take this country backward. Backwards to an America where there is no right to choose, no right to privacy, no right to marry who you love," he said. "They

look at the mob that stormed the Capitol on January 6 not as insurrectionists who placed a dagger to the throat of our democracy, but they look at them as patriots."

Switching to a more hopeful stance, the US commander-in-chief quickly pivoted to highlighting that "there are far more Americans... who reject the extreme MAGA ideology than those that accept it."

"It's within our power, it's within our hands - yours and mine - to stop the assault on American democracy. I believe America is at an inflection point. One of those moments that determine the shape of everything that's to come after it," Biden said. "And now America must choose to move forward or backwards. ...To be a nation of hope and optimism or a nation of fear and darkness. MAGA Republicans have made their choice - they live not in the light of truth but in the shadow of lies."

"Together we can choose a better path," he urged, calling on the nation to "come together, unite behind the single purpose of defending our democracy regardless of your ideology."

Biden took the opportunity to underscore that "plain and simple -- there is no place for political violence in America. Period. None." He continued, stating that the US cannot be "pro-insurrectionist and pro-American. They are incompatible."

"As your president, I will defend our democracy with every fiber of my being, and I'm asking every American to join me. MAGA Republicans look at America and see carnage and darkness and despair. They spread fear and lies. Lies told for profit and power. But I see a different America. An America with an unlimited future. An America that's about to take off."

Protesters outside Independence Hall, where Biden held his speech, were heard shouting "Let's go, Brandon" for several minutes throughout the event. Also heard on the sidelines was a chorus of what is believed to be police sirens.

Biden's speech, which was not carried live by all major broadcasters, has received a mixed response from the public, with many praising his strong stance. Some individuals within the Trump camp, such as Trump-era adviser Jenna Ellis, have referred to the president's remarks as "[grounds for impeachment](#)."

Former US President Donald Trump has since responded to Biden's speech, [calling](#) on others to "slowly but passionately" explain to his successor that "MAGA" stands for "Make America Great Again," and that if he doesn't want follow the motto, "he certainly should not be representing the United States of America."

Trump's response came hours after White House officials worked to shut down criticism that the Thursday address was overly political. Biden insiders have stressed that the address was meant to simply underscore the urgency around the threat posed by "MAGA Republicans."

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.

Sexual Assault Cases in US Military Hit Record High in 2021 – Report

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) – The number of US military personnel who experienced sexual assaults hit a record high in 2021, the Pentagon said in a report.

"8.4 percent of active duty women and 1.5 percent of active duty men indicated experiencing unwanted sexual contact in the 12 months prior to being surveyed. Based on these rates, the Department estimates that 35,875 active duty Service members experienced some form of unwanted sexual contact in the year prior to being surveyed," the report read.

These numbers are the highest since 2006, when 6.8% of women in active service reported sexual harassment, along with 1.8% of their male colleagues, according to the survey.

The Pentagon noted that a big share of sexual crimes were not reported due to different reasons, including due to thinking "it was not serious enough to report" and thinking "no action would be taken."

"Additionally, 47 percent of women cited worrying about potential negative consequences from co-workers or peers as a reason for not reporting, while 32 percent of men cited some other reason for not reporting their incident of USC [unwanted sexual contact]," the report said.

In total, the Pentagon received 8,866 reports of sexual harassment in 2021, which is 1,050 cases more than in the previous year, it 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.

G7 Price Cap to Hamper Russia in Ukraine, Hasten Deterioration of Russian Economy - Yellen

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen on Friday hailed the newly agreed G7 price cap on Russian oil, saying it would hamper Russia's special operation in Ukraine and speed up the deterioration of Russia's economy.

"Today's action will help deliver a major blow for Russian finances and will both hinder Russia's ability to fight its unprovoked war in Ukraine and hasten the deterioration of the Russian economy," Yellen said in a statement. "This price cap is one of the most powerful tools we have to fight inflation and protect workers and businesses in the United States and globally from future price spikes caused by global disruptions."

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 Host First US-Pacific Island Country Summit on September 28-29 - White House

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) – US President Joe Biden will host the first US-Pacific Island Country Summit on September 28-29, White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said on Friday.

"President Biden will host the first ever US- Pacific Island Country Summit, which will be held in Washington, DC on September 28-29, 2022," Jean-Pierre said in a statement.

The summit will demonstrate Washington's deep and enduring partnership with Pacific Island countries and the Pacific region that is underpinned by shared history, values, and people-to-people ties, 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.

Gasoline Price Drop in US Mostly Caused by Recession Fears - Ex-Texas Oil Regulator

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - The recent drop in US gasoline prices is not due to President Joe Biden's decision to release oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), it is mostly due to recession fears, Ryan Sitton, a former commissioner in the Texas Railroad Commission, the oil regulator in the United States' top oil-producing state, told Sputnik.

"That has almost nothing to do with Biden releasing oil from the oil reserves," Sitton said.

"Really, that is almost entirely due to recession fears."

The national average price for a gallon of regular gasoline in the United States is \$3.83 as of Thursday, down from an all-time high price of \$5.01 a gallon on June 14, according to the American Automobile Association.

"Everyone feels confident a recession is coming, they just don't know what's it gonna look like," Sitton said. "So that is why the price of oil has dropped, it is entirely because people are speculating that the recession is going to cause a drop in demand for oil."

Although there has been almost no drop in consumption of oil and gasoline in the United States, some inventory gains, a gradual increase in global oil production, and some pockets of refining capacity brought online, Sitton said he believes there is still a dramatic under supply of oil and not enough money has been put into producing more oil.

Sitton projects the potential shortage could increase the price of a barrel of crude oil to \$120 over the next six to 12 months.

"The things that the Biden administration has done have made it more likely that prices are going to go up, not down," Sitton said. "Why that is? It is because when you do things like release from the Strategic Petroleum Reserves to try to keep prices down, when you try to work a deal with other countries to fill your oil supply needs, you send a message to the oil producers in the United States that this is not going to be a stable market."

The Biden administration's energy policies have dissuaded investment in oil production, Sitton said.

Oil prices fell for a third day in a row on Thursday after new lockdowns in China over coronavirus concerns sent US crude to January lows of almost \$85 a barrel. New York-traded West Texas Intermediate (WTI), the benchmark for US crude, settled down \$2.94, or 3.3%, at \$86.61. It fell 2.3% on Wednesday and 5.5% on Tuesday.

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 Can Replace Russian Gas to Europe, Risks Shortages Elsewhere - Ex-Texas Oil Regulator

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - The United States can provide Europe with enough Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) to replace Russian gas supply but it would cause a supply

shortage for other countries around the world, Ryan Sitton, a former commissioner in the Texas Railroad Commission, the oil regulator in the United States' top oil-producing state, told Sputnik. Russian Security Council Deputy Chairman Dmitry Medvedev said that Russia is ready to provide enough gas supply to Europe, but those deliveries could be disrupted if the European Union refuses to supply repaired turbines for the Nord Stream 1 pipeline or to launch Nord Stream 2, and if they prohibit payments.

"US can absolutely fill that gap, but it will mean supply shortages in other parts of the world, means natural gas prices also are going to go up and it means we're going to draw down our stores a little bit," Sitton said.

Sitton pointed out that the United States exports up to 20 billion cubic feet a day of natural gas to some 40 different countries. Rerouting all LNG supply to Europe would cause shortages for other countries that are regular customers for US natural gas, he added.

Europe consumes about 40 billion cubic feet of natural gas a day in general, but in the winter it could get up to 50 billion cubic feet per day, Sitton said. Europe imports up to 50% of its natural gas from Russia during the winter, he added.

Moreover, Europe has some infrastructure issues that would make it challenging to distribute LNG supply throughout Europe since it relied on pipelines from Russia. The region does not have enough LNG port terminals, LNG storage and LNG decompression facilities to handle such a heavy load of LNG supply from the United States, Sitton said.

The White House said last week that global liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports to Europe have risen by 84% compared to 2021, LNG supply to Europe increased by 20 billion cubic meters compared to last year, it added.

White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said during a press briefing last week that the Biden administration understands there is more work to do to increase natural gas supply to Europe ahead of the winter.

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.

Novelis Excludes Russian Metal in 2023 Supply Tender for European Factories – Reports

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) – Novelis has excluded metal of Russian origin in its tender for supplying its European factories for 2023, Bloomberg reported on Friday, citing a company spokesperson.

Hindalco-owned Novelis, one of the largest manufacturers of aluminum products, issued the tender this week, as the aluminum industry enters its season for negotiating supply contracts for 2023.

Novelis' existing contracts will not be affected by its new restriction on Russian metal, Bloomberg reported, citing two people familiar with the matter.

Russia is a major producer of aluminum, nickel, and copper, but has not yet faced Western sanctions for these products.

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.

G7's Russia Oil Price Cap May Destabilize Global Market - Ex-Texas Oil Regulator

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - The G7's plan to introduce a price cap on Russian oil may destabilize the global market again, Ryan Sitton, a former commissioner in the Texas Railroad Commission, the oil regulator in the United States' top oil-producing state, told Sputnik. On Friday, the G7 finance ministers agreed to introduce a price cap for Russian oil, according to their joint statement

"What you end up doing is you sort of price fix the entire market is what happens," Sitton said.

"The problem with that is that will destabilize [global market] again."

Sitton said that a price cap on Russian oil will may drop the price of a barrel of crude oil below \$80 for a short period, but in another year it may climb to \$130 a barrel because the world won't be producing enough oil.

Moreover, Sitton explained that oil producers may be dissuaded from investing in more oil production because countries will be more willing to buy discounted oil from Russia.

The G7 member states includes the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Italy, Germany, Japan, and France.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak slammed a price cap on Russian oil as absurd, warning that Moscow would not deliver oil and oil products to countries that support the decision.

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 Adds 315,000 Jobs in August, Unemployment Rate Rises to 3.7% - Labor Dept.

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - US employers added 315,000 jobs in August, slightly above economists' expectations, but the jobless rate also rose to 3.7% from July's 3.5%, Labor Department data showed on Friday.

"Total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 315,000 in August, and the unemployment rate rose to 3.7 percent," the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a unit within the Labor Department, said in a news release.

An unemployment rate of 4% or below is defined by the Federal Reserve as "maximum employment."

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.

NASA Engineers 'Comfortable' With Artemis 1 Launch Risk Assessment - Flight Director

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - NASA Artemis Program top engineers are comfortable with their risk assessment in moving ahead with the September 3 first unmanned lunar mission launch with a backup launch date of Monday, Artemis Lead Flight Director Mike Serafin told a press conference,

"We are comfortable with our flight analysis and risk assessment," Serafin told reporters at Kennedy Space Center on Thursday. "Work at the launch pad has been completed ...There is no appreciable rise in risk."

NASA engineers have resolved the issue of venting hydrogen and no longer regard that as an issue, Serafin added..

"We know we have a nonperformance at the intertank flange area. There is a small chance it could be liberated and hit a spot on the booster. [However] The likelihood of this is low," he said. NASA Launch Weather Officer Melody Lovin also confirmed that weather looked good for the launch with a 60% likelihood of excellent conditions on Saturday and 70% for the Monday launch window. Therefore she did not expect the weather to be a "showstopper" for the launch. NASA on Monday said it called off the planned test flight of the Artemis-1 rocket then after a series of setbacks including an engine issue, a hydrogen leak, and stormy weather off the coast of Florida.

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 - Reagan in Letter to Adviser Massie Talked About Chemistry With Gorbachev in First Summit

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - Former US President Ronald Reagan in a letter to his adviser Suzanne Massie shared that there was chemistry between him and the late Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev during their Geneva Summit, the original letter, provided to Sputnik by Massie's representative in Russia, Balthasar Schaldenbrand, said.

"Thank you very much for your warm letter, your good wishes and your generous words. I was pleased to hear your views on the summit and the 'man in the street,'" Reagan said in the letter.

"I'm not going to let myself get euphoric but, still, I have a feeling we might be at a point of beginning. There did seem to be something of a chemistry between the General Secretary and myself. Certainly it was different from talking to [former Soviet leader Andrei] Gromyko."

The letter is dated February 10, 1986 and was made public for the very first time on Thursday.

"Incidentally, twice in our private conversation he invoked the name of God and once cited a bible verse," Reagan shared in the letter. "This has stuck in my mind and stays a nagging question that won't go away. I hope nothing comes up to interfere with our next meeting, which I hope will be in June."

The archive consists of 14 letters that Massie decided to make public. Another letter is dated June 10, 1988 and is written to her by Reagan after the Summit with Gorbachev in Moscow.

"I am writing to thank you once more for coming to lunch at the White House last month on the eve of the Moscow Summit. I found my session with you and other distinguished Soviet scholars

a distinct asset in preparing me for the trip to Moscow, both for my one-on-one meetings with the General Secretary and for the many other events on my itinerary," Reagan said. "You have my deep appreciation for taking the time to join me on this occasion, and on so many others, to share your knowledge about the insight into people and politics in the Soviet Union. Again, thank you for your contributions."

Massie operated as an unofficial advisor to Reagan as a backchannel to the Soviet Union from 1984-1988. During her service, Massie shared with Reagan her extensive knowledge of Russian culture and people, helped him prepare for the meetings with Gorbachev and contributed to ending of the Cold War between the two countries. She famously taught Reagan the Russian proverb, "trust but verify," which he repeatedly used during missile treaty talks with Gorbachev.

Gorbachev died on Tuesday at the age of 91 in Moscow after a long and serious illness, according to the Central Clinical Hospital. He will be laid to rest at the Novodevichy cemetery in Moscow after a public farewell ceremony on Saturday.

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 - Biden to Host S. African Counterpart September 16 for Talks on Energy, Trade - White House

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - President Joe Biden will host South African counterpart Cyril Ramaphosa on September 16 for talks on energy, climate, and trade, White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said in a statement.

"On Friday, September 16, President Biden will welcome South African President Cyril Ramaphosa to the White House. The leaders, building on their productive call in April and the U.S.-South Africa Strategic Dialogue in August, will discuss opportunities to deepen our cooperation on trade and investment, infrastructure, climate and energy, and health. The two Presidents will reaffirm the importance of our enduring partnership, and discuss our work together to address regional and global challenge," Jean-Pierre said on Thursday.

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 Host S. African Counterpart September 16 for Talks on Energy, Trade - White House

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - President Joe Biden will host South African counterpart Cyril Ramaphosa on September 16 for talks on energy, climate, and trade, White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said in a statement.

"On Friday, September 16, President Biden will welcome South African President Cyril Ramaphosa to the White House. The leaders, building on their productive call in April and the U.S.-South Africa Strategic Dialogue in August, will discuss opportunities to deepen our

cooperation on trade and investment, infrastructure, climate and energy, and health. The two Presidents will reaffirm the importance of our enduring partnership, and discuss our work together to address regional and global challenge," Jean-Pierre said on Thursday.

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.

Retired New York Policeman Sentenced to 10 Years for Assault on January 6 - Justice Dept.

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - Retired New York Police Department officer and former Marine Thomas Webster has been sentenced to ten years in prison for assaulting a law enforcement officer at the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, the US Justice Department said. "On Jan. 6, Webster... attended a rally and then moved to the Capitol, where he illegally entered the Capitol grounds," the Justice Department said in a press release on Thursday. "Webster approached an officer from the Metropolitan Police Department who was behind the metal gates. Webster pointed his finger at the officer and began swearing at him, telling him, among other things to "take your s*** off," an apparent invitation to the officer to take off his badge and fight."

Webster shoved the metal gate into the officer's body, raised the flagpole and tried to strike the officer, the release said.

"The officer managed wrestled the flagpole away from Webster but he broke through the metal barricade, tackled the officer, knocked him to the ground, choked him and then tried to tear off his gas mask," the release said.

While Webster had the officer on the ground, other members of the group of protesters began kicking the officer who sustained several injuries, the release also said.

Judge Amit Mehta sentenced Webster to the longest sentence yet in a January 6 case. He was found guilty of five felonies and one misdemeanor charge, the release added.

After he serves his sentence, Webster will be placed on three years' supervised release and has been ordered to pay \$2,060 in restitution, according to the release.

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 Says Trump, MAGA Republicans Represent Extremism That Threatens Foundation of US (Updates with details, background in paras 4-7)

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden said that MAGA republicans and former President Donald Trump put in danger the very foundation of the United States.

"Donald Trump and the MAGA Republicans represent an extremism that threatens the very foundations of our Republic," Biden said in remarks in Pennsylvania on Thursday.

"MAGA" refers to the "Make America Great Again" slogan of former US president and political rival Donald Trump. Trump has yet to formally announce or file for a 2024 presidential campaign.

Biden also said MAGA Republicans embrace anger and thrive on chaos. The US president clarified that a majority of Republicans are not MAGA Republicans, adding that he has been able to work with mainstream Republicans.

A protester or protesters could be heard heckling Biden towards the end of his speech.

Biden delivered his "battle for the soul of the nation" speech outside of Independence Hall in Philadelphia on Thursday night. Biden campaign officials earlier this week filed documents with the Federal Election Commission, moving him closer to an official run at a second term in 2024. US House of Representatives Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy said in a speech earlier on Thursday that Biden's speech would vilify tens of millions of Americans who have supported Donald Trump.

McCarthy further said the Justice Department's raid of former President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence in Florida is an assault on US democracy, considering he is Biden's top political rival.

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 - Biden Says Trump, MAGA Republicans Represent Extremism That Threatens Foundation of US

(Repeats to fix date)

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden said that MAGA republicans and former President Donald Trump put in danger the very foundation of the United States.

"Donald Trump and the MAGA Republicans represent an extremism that threatens the very foundations of our Republic," Biden said in remarks in Pennsylvania on Thursday.

"MAGA" refers to the "Make America Great Again" slogan of former US president and political rival Donald Trump. Trump has yet to formally announce or file for a 2024 presidential campaign.

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 Says Trump, MAGA Republicans Represent Extremism That Threatens Foundation of US

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden said that MAGA republicans and former President Donald Trump put in danger the very foundation of the United States.

"Donald Trump and the MAGA Republicans represent an extremism that threatens the very foundations of our Republic," Biden said in remarks in Pennsylvania on Thursday.

"MAGA" refers to the "Make America Great Again" slogan of former US president and political rival Donald Trump. Trump has yet to formally announce or file for a 2024 presidential campaign.

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.

RECAST - Reagan in Letter to Adviser Massie Talked About Chemistry With Gorbachev in First Summit

(Recast to fix typo in lede)

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - Former US Leader Ronald Reagan in a letter to his adviser Suzanne Massie shared that there was chemistry between him and the late Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev during their Geneva Summit, the original letter, provided to Sputnik by Massie's representative in Russia, Balthasar Schaldenbrand, said.

"Thank you very much for your warm letter, your good wishes and your generous words. I was pleased to hear your views on the summit and the 'man in the street,'" Reagan said in the letter.

"I'm not going to let myself get euphoric but, still, I have a feeling we might be at a point of beginning. There did seem to be something of a chemistry between the General Secretary and myself. Certainly it was different from talking to [former Soviet leader Andrei] Gromyko."

The letter is dated February 10, 1986 and was made public for the very first time on Thursday.

"Incidentally, twice in our private conversation he invoked the name of God and once cited a bible verse," Reagan shared in the letter. "This has stuck in my mind and stays a nagging question that won't go away. I hope nothing comes up to interfere with our next meeting, which I hope will be in June."

The archive consists of 14 letters that Massie decided to make public. Another letter is dated June 10, 1988 and is written to her by Reagan after the Summit with Gorbachev in Moscow.

"I am writing to thank you once more for coming to lunch at the White House last month on the eve of the Moscow Summit. I found my session with you and other distinguished Soviet scholars a distinct asset in preparing me for the trip to Moscow, both for my one-on-one meetings with the General Secretary and for the many other events on my itinerary," Reagan said. "You have my deep appreciation for taking the time to join me on this occasion, and on so many others, to share your knowledge about the insight into people and politics in the Soviet Union. Again, thank you for your contributions."

Massie operated as an unofficial advisor to Reagan as a backchannel to the Soviet Union from 1984-1988. During her service, Massie shared with Reagan her extensive knowledge of Russian culture and people, helped him prepare for the meetings with Gorbachev and contributed to ending of the Cold War between the two countries. She famously taught Reagan the Russian proverb, "trust but verify," which he repeatedly used during missile treaty talks with Gorbachev.

Gorbachev died on Tuesday at the age of 91 in Moscow after a long and serious illness, according to the Central Clinical Hospital. He will be laid to rest at the Novodevichy cemetery in Moscow after a public farewell ceremony on Saturday.

9/1/2022 7:21:33 PM -04:00

Russian Embassies in Washington, Ottawa Open Book of Condolences for Late Leader Gorbachev

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - The Russian embassies in Washington and Ottawa are composing a book of condolences for the late Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev after he passed away earlier this week, the embassies announced via social media.

"In connection with the death of the first and only President of the USSR Mikhail Sergeyeovich Gorbachev, the Condolence Book has been opened at the Embassy of the Russian Federation in the United States," the Russian Embassy in Washington said on Thursday. The Russian Embassy in Ottawa sent out a similar notice.

Emails with words of sympathy and condolence can be sent to the Washington and Ottawa embassies at ruspressusa@mid.ru and condolences@rusembassy.ca respectively.

Gorbachev died on Tuesday in Moscow at the age of 91 after a long and serious illness, according to the Central Clinical Hospital. Gorbachev, known for overseeing the fall of the Soviet Union, will be laid to rest at the Novodevichy cemetery in Moscow after a public farewell ceremony on Saturday.

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 Justice Dept. Raid on Trump's Home 'Assault on Democracy' - US House Minority Leader

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - The Justice Department's raid of former President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence in Florida is an assault on US democracy, House of Representatives Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy said during a speech in Pennsylvania.

"Joe Biden and the politicized Department of Justice launched a raid on the home of his top political rival, Donald Trump; that is an assault on democracy," McCarthy said on Thursday ahead of Biden's speech in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Last month, the FBI seized documents from Trump's residence in connection to a federal probe seeking to determine whether the materials stored there were of a sensitive nature, and whether the improper storage of such could constitute violations of national security protocols. Trump denied having any classified documents and characterized the raid as a continuation of the political witch hunt to prevent him to run for office again.

McCarthy added that Biden's government has shielded his family and his administration from accountability of significant abuses of power and foreign dealings by his son, Hunter, as well as other members of the Biden family, for personal gain.

On Thursday night, Biden will deliver a speech on the "battle for the soul of the nation" in Philadelphia. Biden campaign officials earlier this week filed documents with the Federal Election Commission, moving him closer to an official run at a second term.

Earlier on Thursday, Republican lawmakers sent a letter to the US Department of Energy requesting a briefing from the agency on the sale of US national oil reserves to a Chinese company with links to Hunter Biden.

According to the Department of Energy, the Biden administration recently sold almost a million barrels of oil from the US Strategic Petroleum Reserve oil to a subsidiary of Sinopec.

Sinopec, a state-run energy company, is a major producer and purchaser of petroleum products for China. The parent company Sinopec Group is one of the largest oil conglomerates in the world and is run by China's State 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.

Biden in Thursday Speech to Vilify Millions of Americans Who Back Trump - McCarthy

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden in his speech on Thursday night will vilify tens of millions of Americans who have supported Donald Trump, US House of Representatives Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy said in a speech.

"Tonight [Biden] he will say democracy is at stake and he will declare that only Democrats hold the moral upper hand," McCarthy said ahead of Biden's speech on Thursday evening. "What Joe Biden doesn't understand is that the soul of America is in the tens of millions of hard working people, of loving families, of law abiding citizens who will be vilified for simply wanting a stronger, safer and more prosperous country."

Earlier on Thursday, the White House released excerpts of the speech Biden will deliver at Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Biden will talk about so-called "MAGA forces" allegedly trying to take the United States backwards, to make it a country with no right to choose, no right to privacy, no right to contraception and no right to gay marriage, according to the excerpts. Trump's iconic slogan during his presidential campaigns has been Make America Great Again (MAGA) and democrats have come to associate the term MAGA with Trump supporters even though many independents and others had adopted the slogan as well.

On Thursday night, Biden will deliver a speech that he said was about the "battle for the soul of the nation" in Philadelphia. Biden campaign officials earlier this week filed documents with the Federal Election Commission, moving him closer to an official run at a second term in 2024.

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.

Reagan in Letter to Adviser Massie Talked About Chemistry With Gorbachev in First Summit

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - Former US Leader Ronald Reagan in a letter to his adviser Suzanne Massie shared that there was chemistry between him and the late Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev during their Geneva Summit, the original letter, provided to Sputnik Massie's representative in Russia, Balthasar Schaldenbrand, said.

"Thank you very much for your warm letter, your good wishes and your generous words. I was pleased to hear your views on the summit and the 'man in the street,'" Reagan said in the letter. "I'm not going to let myself get euphoric but, still, I have a feeling we might be at a point of beginning. There did seem to be something of a chemistry between the General Secretary and myself. Certainly it was different from talking to [former Soviet leader Andrei] Gromyko."

The letter is dated February 10, 1986 and was made public for the very first time on Thursday. "Incidentally, twice in our private conversation he invoked the name of God and once cited a bible verse," Reagan shared in the letter. "This has stuck in my mind and stays a nagging question that won't go away. I hope nothing comes up to interfere with our next meeting, which I hope will be in June."

The archive consists of 14 letters that Massie decided to make public. Another letter is dated June 10, 1988 and is written to her by Reagan after the Summit with Gorbachev in Moscow. "I am writing to thank you once more for coming to lunch at the White House last month on the eve of the Moscow Summit. I found my session with you and other distinguished Soviet scholars a distinct asset in preparing me for the trip to Moscow, both for my one-on-one meetings with the General Secretary and for the many other events on my itinerary," Reagan said. "You have my deep appreciation for taking the time to join me on this occasion, and on so many others, to share your knowledge about the insight into people and politics in the Soviet Union. Again, thank you for your contributions."

Massie operated as an unofficial advisor to Reagan as a backchannel to the Soviet Union from 1984-1988. During her service, Massie shared with Reagan her extensive knowledge of Russian culture and people, helped him prepare for the meetings with Gorbachev and contributed to ending of the Cold War between the two countries. She famously taught Reagan the Russian proverb, "trust but verify," which he repeatedly used during missile treaty talks with Gorbachev.

Gorbachev died on Tuesday at the age of 91 in Moscow after a long and serious illness, according to the Central Clinical Hospital. He will be laid to rest at the Novodevichy cemetery in Moscow after a public farewell ceremony on Saturday.

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.

Man Pleads Guilty to Assaulting US Capitol Police Officer Who Died After January 6 Riot

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - A New Jersey man who used pepper spray against two police officers during the January 6, 2021 riot at the US Capitol pleaded guilty to two felony assault charges, the Justice Department said in a press release.

"Julian Elie Khater, 33, of Somerset, New Jersey, pleaded guilty in the District of Columbia to two counts of assaulting, resisting, or impeding officers with a dangerous weapon," the release said on Thursday. "Khater sprayed pepper spray from a cannister in his right hand at the officers. He first sprayed a US Capitol Police Officer, identified in court documents as 'Officer B.S.,' in the face."

According to The Washington Post, those initials stand for Brian Sicknick, the Capitol Police Officer who died at a local hospital on the evening of January 7, 2021 after succumbing to injuries incurred while physically engaging with protesters the day before.

After being pepper sprayed by Khater, Sicknick then "turned his head away and retreated from the police line," the Justice Department statement said.

Khater will be sentenced on December 13 and faces a statutory maximum of 20 years in prison, the release added.

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

US to Halt Humanitarian Parole for At-Risk Afghans Seeking to Come to US - White House

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - The United States will halt humanitarian parole for at-risk Afghan refugees seeking to come to the United States, White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said during a press briefing.

Earlier on Thursday, US media reported the Biden administration will no longer offer entry into the United States to Afghans who are considered to be at risk under humanitarian "parole" starting on October 1.

"We are adopting a new model where Afghans will travel directly to the communities where they will be moving with the help of Refugee Resettlement organizations without a safe haven stopover in the United States," Jean-Pierre said on Thursday when asked if the Biden administration is ending humanitarian parole for Afghan refugees.

The White House emphasized that the Biden administration will now focus on work to improve efforts to help Afghan allies resettle in the United States and reunite with family members still in Afghanistan. The administration will also seek to provide these individuals with a pathway to permanent residency status in the United States, Jean-Pierre added.

Parole, which offers a quick option rather than the year-long process to obtain visa or refugee status, would be limited to a very small number of exceptional cases, according to media reports.

Since the United States withdrew from Afghanistan in August 2021, it has resettled about 86,000 Afghans under the so-called "Operation Allies Welcome." Some 90% of them came in through the parole process.

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 Says 'MAGA Forces' Trying to Repeal Rights, People Must Defend US Democracy

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - The United States faces the possibility of having rights to abortion and same-sex marriage rolled back if so-called "MAGA forces" are allowed to take back control of the country, US President Joe Biden said in excerpts of a speech he will deliver later tonight.

Later Thursday, Biden will deliver a speech on the "battle for the soul of the nation" in Pennsylvania. Biden campaign officials earlier this week filed documents with the Federal Election Commission, moving him closer to an official run at a second term.

"So tonight I have come here to the place where it all began to speak plainly to the nation about the threats we face... MAGA forces are determined to take this country backwards. Backwards to an America where there is no right to choose, no right to privacy, no right to contraception, no right to marry who you love," Biden said in remarks as prepared for delivery on Thursday. Biden also said Americans must defend democracy, because it is not guaranteed. "MAGA" refers to the "Make America Great Again" slogan of former US president and political rival Donald Trump. Trump has yet to formally announce or file for a 2024 presidential campaign.

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.

France Hopes Russian, Ukrainian Foreign Ministers to Attend UNSC Meeting on Ukraine
-Envoy

UNITED NATIONS, September 2 (Sputnik) - France hopes the Russian and Ukrainian foreign affairs ministers will attend the UN Security Council ministerial meeting on Ukraine scheduled for September 22, French Ambassador to the United Nations Nicolas de Riviere said.

"All of the ministers of the Security Council will be invited. And so, by default, the Russian Minister, as well, since it's a meeting on Ukraine," Riviere said during a briefing on Thursday.

"Ukraine will also be invited at the ministerial level, so the Minister from Ukraine will also be invited, so both of them are invited and France hopes both of them will come."

The French ambassador said the decision to attend the meeting and possibly meet is up to the foreign ministers, but this is not the aim of holding the gathering.

France is presiding with the US Security Council during the month of September and has signaled it is keen to discuss the situation in Ukraine.

As of now, Ukraine will be discussed in three separate meetings in September but that number is expected to increase as states also tend to request meetings throughout the month based on urgent and other events on the ground.

The probability of the Russian and Ukrainian ministers meeting is high also because the United Nations General Assembly 77th session will open on September 13. During the general debate, which starts on September 20, many ministers will be attending in person at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

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.

Oil Prices Tumble for 3rd Straight Day, US Crude Nears \$85

NEW YORK, September 2 (Sputnik) - Oil prices fell for a third day in a row on Thursday after new lockdowns in China over coronavirus concerns sent US crude to January lows of almost \$85 a barrel.

Brent crude, the London-traded global benchmark for oil, settled down \$3.28, or 3.4%, at \$92.36 per barrel, after a session low at \$92.13. Brent fell 2.8% on Wednesday and 5% on Tuesday. New York-traded West Texas Intermediate (WTI), the benchmark for US crude, settled down \$2.94, or 3.3%, at \$86.61. It fell 2.3% on Wednesday and 5.5% on Tuesday.

Thursday's session low in WTI was \$86, just \$1 from snapping the \$85 support.

"From a technical perspective, a break below \$85 could make WTI test the monthly Middle Bollinger Band of \$82," Sunil Kumar Dixit, chief technical strategist at SKCharting.com, said. "If that snaps, it could go all the way down for a test of \$77.98 in the short term, before any fresh rebound takes it toward the \$97-\$99 resistance zone. That again is from a technical perspective. From a more comprehensive outlook on oil, you have to consider the fundamentals too, of course."

Oil's fundamentals looked cloudy at best as Asia's factory activity slumped in August amid China's zero-COVID-19 curbs and cost pressures continued to hurt businesses, darkening the outlook for the region's fragile recovery, according to reports.

Southern Chinese tech hub Shenzhen, meanwhile, tightened COVID-19 curbs as cases continued to mount, with large events and indoor entertainment suspended for three days in the city's most populous district, Baoan.

Also pressuring oil this week was the White House's announcement that President Joe Biden spoke with Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid on Wednesday on reviving the 2015 nuclear agreement that is sought by Iran and strongly opposed by Israel. At stake is the potential removal of US sanctions on Iranian oil that could add up to a million barrels per day more on the global exports market for crude.

Oil prices could fare better next week though when the oil producing alliance OPEC Plus - which combines the original 13 members of the Saudi-led Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and with ten allies led by Russia - holds its monthly meeting.

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 Will Consider Full Pardons for January 6 Defendants if He Runs, Wins Presidency

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - Former US President Donald Trump said during an interview that he would very favorably consider full pardons for individuals charged in connection with the events at the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, if he decides to run again in 2024 and is elected.

"I will look very, very favorably about full pardons if I decide to run and if I win," Trump said on Thursday. "And I mean full pardons with an apology to many."

Trump said he has met with a number of people involved in the matter and is financially supporting them.

The former president criticized the US justice system as being "cold-hearted" during the prosecution and sentencing of individuals charged with offenses related to the January 6 events at the US Capitol.

Trump has yet to formally announce his intention to run in the election for US president in 2024.

A crowd of people entered the US Capitol on January 6, 2021 to protest the certification of the 2020 presidential election results from several states Trump has claimed were fraudulent. Numerous individuals have been charged by the federal authorities with alleged crimes, including trespassing and disrupting official congressional proceedings, and Congress formed a special panel to investigate Trump's connection to the incident.

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 Requests UN Security Council Meeting on Ukraine for September 7 - Envoy

UNITED NATIONS, September 1 (Sputnik) - The United States has requested a UN Security Council meeting on Ukraine to be held in the afternoon on September 7, the French Ambassador to the United Nations Nicolas de Riviere said on Thursday.

"Between now and then, next week, the subject of Ukraine will still be in the Council with a meeting that should take place on Wednesday, the seventh in the afternoon, on forced displacements in Ukraine upon the request of the United States," Riviere said during a briefing. This meeting on Wednesday will follow a meeting on Ukraine of September 6, which was requested by Russia with a focus on the situation in and around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant.

France presides with the UN Security Council for the month of September and has signaled that it is interested to discuss the situation in Ukraine.

As of now, Ukraine will be discussed in three separate meetings in September but that number is expected to increase as states also tend to request meetings throughout the month based on urgent events on the ground.

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, September 2 (Sputnik) -

IAEA VISIT TO ZAPORIZHZHIA PLANT

* IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi said after his visit to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant that much work still needs to be done, so the agency would maintain a permanent presence there.

* IAEA experts left the liberated territory of the Zaporizhzhia region, a Sputnik correspondent reported.

* Russia did what it needed to do to protect IAEA inspectors visiting the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant when it foiled an attempt by Ukrainian troops to seize the plant, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

* Russia has requested a UN Security Council meeting on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant to be held on September 6, Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations Dmitry Polyanskiy said.

ENERGY MARKETS

* Gas production is falling, while Gazprom's dividends are growing, Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak told reporters on Thursday.

* UK-Dutch oil and gas giant Shell said that it will not participate in the new operator of Russia's Sakhalin-2 project, and informed its partners and the Russian government about it.

* US company ExxonMobil so far did not request the Russian government's permission to withdraw from the Sakhalin-1 project, Novak said.

* Russian oil sector is preparing for the introduction of an EU embargo on oil from Russia, all plans are focused on preserving production, Novak told reporters.

POLAND-GERMANY REPARATIONS DISPUTE

* Poland will demand 6.2 trillion Polish zlotys (\$1.3 trillion) from Germany in reparations for the damage caused during World War II, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the head of Poland's ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party, said on Thursday.

* Germany's position regarding reparations to Poland for World War II remains unchanged, the issue of them is "closed," a spokesman for the German Foreign Ministry told RIA Novosti.

RUSSIA-KAZAKHSTAN RELATIONS

* Russian President Vladimir Putin held a phone conversation with his Kazakh counterpart, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, and wished him success in implementing major goals announced by him on Thursday, the Kremlin said.

* The Kremlin wants to see Russia and Kazakhstan have great relations in the future amid reforms announced in Nur-Sultan, spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

FBI SEARCHES VEKSELBERG PROPERTY

* Federal agents searched two properties in New York linked to sanctioned Russian businessman Viktor Vekselberg, NBC reported on Thursday citing people familiar with the matter.

* Federal agents took away about five boxes marked "evidence" and two safes in a raid of a New York residence allegedly linked to Vekselberg, a Sputnik correspondent reported from the scene.

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.

Russian Orthodox Parishes in New Zealand, Australia Send Aid to Church in Madagascar

WASHINGTON, September 2 (Sputnik) - Russian Orthodox Church clergy and parishioners from New Zealand and Australia are helping more than 20 priests to spread Orthodoxy in

Madagascar, supplying the parishes there with basic things such as vestments, Dean of Russian Orthodox Church parishes in New Zealand Archpriest Vladimir Boikov told Sputnik. "So far, we have sent about 30 to 40 priest's vestments, deacon's vestments, vestments for acolytes, all manner of vestments for altar tables and Icon stands," Boikov said.

The mission in Madagascar is part of the Moscow Patriarchate Exarchate of Africa and consists of over 20 priests and one deacon, Archpriest Vladimir explained. He learned from the social media posts of other Russian priests serving in the exarchate that the mission is in need of vestments and decided to help. The first two shipments totaling 375 pounds have already been delivered to the island, while a third, and possibly a fourth one, are scheduled for this fall.

With the permission of the local Bishop in Australia, the aid mission to Madagascar was undertaken in memory of the late ROCOR First Hierarch Metropolitan Hilarion (Kapral), and vestments were donated from all corners of the Australian and New Zealand diocese. The idea was to send vestments and other things, which are old but remain in very good condition and are ready to use immediately.

"All these things were handmade by our parishioners in the 1950s through to the 1980s. I grew up in Australia and was able to recognize some of the vestments from bygone days," Boikov said. "Our only concern was that most of the clergy in Madagascar are not very tall and these vestments might be too large for them."

Boikov recommended the local clergy to modify them, but the local dean, father Nicolas Ramaroson, has already shared the donated vestments with the clergy and everything is in good order and being utilized in the Divine services.

"They were happy to receive all of these things," Boikov noted. "The current political climate makes shipping from Russia difficult at the moment, but politics should not affect our helping the poor. We are pleased that God has given us the opportunity to utilize our unused, but sanctified vestments in aid to our brother Orthodox Christians, who live in the poorest country in Africa. If I knew about the Orthodox Church in Madagascar before, we would have done it before," he added.

Parishes in New Zealand and Australia were glad to help their brothers in Christ in Africa. People there, especially in New Zealand, live quite isolated from the rest of the Orthodox world, and they know how difficult it is to maintain Orthodoxy and parish life in such conditions, Boikov noted.

"We are sending aid from one small part of the world to another small part of the world. Our parishes are very happy to do that," Boikov added. "I asked the Madagascar clergy to pray for all Russian priests and deacons in Australia and New Zealand, and they, in return, asked to do the same. Certainly, as brothers priests, we will pray for each other," Boikov 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.

UN Security Council to Hold Ministerial Meeting on Ukraine September 22 - French Envoy

UNITED NATIONS, September 1 (Sputnik) - The UN Security Council will hold a ministerial meeting on Ukraine on in the morning on September 22, the French Ambassador to the United Nations Nicolas de Riviere said on Thursday.

"I will conclude with the crisis on Ukraine on Thursday the 22nd of September in the morning, the French Minister of Europe and foreign affairs will preside over a ministerial meeting of the Security Council on Ukraine with a particular focus that will be placed on impunity and justice," Riviere said during a press briefing.

The ambassador explained that the meeting will touch upon all of the parameters of the Ukraine crisis.

France is presiding with the UN Security Council during the month of September and has signaled being interested in discussing the situation in Ukraine.

Upon Russia's request, the UN Security Council will also hold a meeting on September 6, focusing on the situation in and around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant.

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.

State Attorneys General Say US Government 'Censorship Enterprise' Colluded With Big Tech

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - A network of officials across the US federal government have been engaging with major social media companies to censor speech in an effort to address purported misinformation, Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt and Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry said on Thursday in a joint statement.

Materials provided so far demonstrate that a so-called "Censorship Enterprise" exists within the federal government, composed of officials in the White House, Department of Homeland Security, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the State Department, FBI and Election Assistance Commission, according to the joint statement.

"This 'Censorship Enterprise' is proven by the Department of Justice's productions thus far, but the full extent of federal officials' collusion with social media companies on censorship is unknown until the Department of Justice produces further communications requested by Missouri and Louisiana," the joint statement said.

The Justice Department has objected to producing some of the most "relevant and probative information" in their possession, the statement added.

A total of 45 federal officials across the interagency were identified as having communicated with social media platforms about censoring alleged misinformation, the joint statement said.

The attorneys general in the joint statement provided current examples of communications between the federal officials and social media companies, including an email between a senior Facebook (banned in Russia as an extremist organization) official and the Surgeon General about misinformation, a scheduled meeting between Twitter and the White House on misinformation and a proposal from the CDC to Facebook to provide a monthly "debunking" meeting.

The attorneys general have filed a Joint Statement on Discovery Disputes, asking the Louisiana District Court to compel the Justice Department to turn over communications between the Biden administration and social media companies, 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.

Bipartisan Group of 50 US Lawmakers Express Concerns Over JCPOA Sanctions Impact - Letter

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - A bipartisan group of 50 US lawmakers sent a letter to President Joe Biden on Thursday expressing concerns about the potential impact of a renewed Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) nuclear agreement with Iran on sanctions against the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

"We are writing to respectfully request that your Administration provide Congress with the full text of any proposal to rejoin the Iran nuclear agreement, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, including any side agreements, and consult with Congress prior to reentering that agreement," the letter said.

The lawmakers are concerned about a provision in the potential new agreement that would make people who engage in business with Iranians who are engaged with the IRGC immune from sanctions.

The proposed provision creates a "troubling precedent" that the lawmakers worry could dilute the effectiveness of terror-related sanctions on the IRGC and provide the organization with a pathway for sanctions evasion, according to the letter.

The United States considers the IRGC to be a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

The letter was signed by 34 Democrats and 16 Republicans, including Representatives Josh Gottheimer, Andrew Garbarino, Carolyn Maloney and Jared Golden.

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 Court Holds Hearing in Trump Request for Special Master But Makes No Ruling - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - A US federal judge held a hearing on former President Donald Trump's request to appoint a special master to review the documents seized by the FBI during a raid of his Mar-a-Lago residence in Florida last month, but did not make a ruling on the matter, CNN reported on Thursday.

Judge Aileen Cannon of the US District Court for the Southern District of Florida heard arguments from government prosecutors and Trump's legal defense team regarding whether to appoint a neutral special master to review the documents taken from the Mar-a-Lago residence by the FBI, the report said.

However, Cannon did not make a ruling from the bench, according to the report.

The FBI seized the documents from Trump's residence in connection to a probe of whether materials stored there were of a sensitive nature, and whether the improper storage of such could constitute violations of national security protocols.

Trump has denied allegations of storing classified information at his residence and condemned the investigation as being politically motivated to prevent him from running in the 2024 presidential election. Trump claims to have declassified any materials stored in his residence and insists he would have cooperated with federal agents if asked.

Trump's legal team has argued that a special master - a neutral attorney to review the materials allegedly related to the case - is necessary to maintain a fair legal process and protect the former president's rights. The government prosecutors have argued that a special master is not needed in the case.

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, US in Discussions Over Refusal to Grant Visas to Russian Diplomats - Spokesman

UNITED NATIONS, September 1 (Sputnik) - The United Nations continues to be in discussions regarding the United States refusal to issue visas to Russian delegates, UN Spokesman Stephane Dujarric said on Thursday.

"The issue of non-issuance of visas to Russian diplomats having business at the UN is constantly and consistently raised with host country authorities. We will continue to do so," Dujarric told journalists.

The comment follows yet another incident when a Russian delegate was blocked from attending a UN Police Summit on Thursday.

Russian Permanent Representative Vasily Nebenzya during the summit said the Russian delegation was not granted visas in another blatant violation of US obligations under the UN Headquarters Agreement.

This is not the first scandal involving US reluctance to issue visas to Russian officials and diplomats this year: in July, Washington refused to grant a visa to Director of the Department of International Information Security of the Russian Foreign Ministry Andrei Krutskikh. Moscow has repeatedly called on the UN Secretariat to resolve the issue, demanding that the US stop hindering Russian diplomats from taking part in international events.

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 Welcomes UN Human Rights Assessment on Xinjiang Uyghur Region - Blinken

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - The United States welcomes outgoing High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet's assessment on the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Thursday.

"The United States welcomes this important report, which describes authoritatively the appalling treatment and abuses of Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups by the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC)," Blinken said in a press release.

Bachelet conducted an official visit to China May 23-28 and wrote a report that said the allegations of patterns of human rights abuses in Xinjiang are credible.

Some of the report's recommendations to China include releasing all individuals arbitrarily deprived of liberty; clarifying information of the whereabouts of detained individuals; investigating human rights violations in detention facilities and allowing establishing a UN Torture and Discrimination Department and an independent mechanism to conduct oversight. Wang Wenbin, a spokesperson with the Chinese Foreign Ministry, told a daily news briefing on Thursday that the damning report was "orchestrated and produced by the US and some Western forces and is completely illegal, null and void."

Blinken said the United States will continue to hold China to account and call on Beijing to release individuals allegedly unjustly detained and to allow independent investigators full and unhindered access to Xinjiang, Tibet, and across the PRC.

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

Police Take Away 5 Boxes, 2 Safes From New York Residence Allegedly Linked to Vekselberg

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - Federal agents took away about five boxes marked "evidence" and two safes in a raid of a New York residence allegedly linked to sanctioned Russian businessman Viktor Vekselberg, a Sputnik correspondent reported from the scene. The police loaded boxes into cars and some of them have already departed.

Earlier in the day, NBC News reported the FBI and ICE's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) are conducting searches at a high-rise on Park Avenue in Manhattan and at an estate in Southampton that are reportedly linked to Vekselberg.

Homeland Security Investigations spokesperson Kate Pote told Sputnik on Thursday the agency could not comment on reports about federal agents searching the two New York properties.

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 Says No Role for US in Creating Demilitarized Zone Around Zaporizhzhia Plant

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - The United States does not have a role to play in creating a demilitarized zone around the Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) in Ukraine, White House Strategic Communications Coordinator John Kirby said on Thursday.

"The president's been clear we're not going to have US troops involved in the war in Ukraine, so I see no role for the United States in creating a demilitarized zone around that [Zaporizhzhia]

power plant," Kirby told Bloomberg TV in an interview. "We do want there to be such a demilitarized zone around that plant."

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors are currently in Ukraine to inspect ZNPP for damage and working conditions after the Pentagon said Ukrainian forces likely fired artillery shells around the plant in attempted counterstrikes on Russian positions.

Both the US and Russia support the IAEA mission to the plant.

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 Hopes China Will Adopt Human Rights Chief's Recommendations on Xinjiang - Spokesperson

UNITED NATIONS, August 30 (Sputnik) - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres hopes the Chinese government will adopt the recommendations provided in the outgoing High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet's report on the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, United Nations spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said on Thursday.

"The Secretary General very much hopes that the government of China will take on board the recommendations put forward in the assessment by the High Commissioner for Human Rights," Dujarric said during a press briefing.

Bachelet conducted an official visit to China May 23-28 and wrote a report that said the allegations of patterns of human rights abuses in Xinjiang are credible.

Some of the report's recommendations to China include releasing all individuals arbitrarily deprived of liberty; clarifying information of the whereabouts of detained individuals;

investigating human rights violations in detention facilities and allowing establishing a UN Torture and Discrimination Department and an independent mechanism to conduct oversight.

Dujarric said the report has also confirmed what Guterres has been saying on Xinjiang for years - namely, that the Uyghur community and its human rights must be respected to make them feel they belong to the country, Dujarric added.

Critics have said Bachelet's report has not been hard hitting about the alleged abuses in Xinjiang and that the Chinese government, having issued objections against the report, has pressured Bachelet not to release it.

Guterres, however, has said that he fully supports Bachelet's independent assessment on the human rights situation in China.

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.

Feds Decline to Comment on Raid of Russian Businessman Vekselberg's New York Properties

NEW YORK, September 1 (Sputnik) - Homeland Security Investigations spokesperson Kate Pote told Sputnik on Thursday the agency could not comment on reports about federal agents

searching two New York properties allegedly linked to sanctioned Russian businessman Viktor Vekselberg.

NBC News reported that said federal agents with the FBI and ICE's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) were seen carrying boxes during a search at a high-rise on Park Avenue in Manhattan and at an estate in Southampton that are reportedly linked to Vekselberg, according to records.

"We're not able to comment on this topic at this time," Pote said in a statement.

According to a Sputnik correspondent, police are outside a high-rise on 515 Park Avenue in Manhattan, New York, where one of the searches is reportedly taking place.

The FBI did not immediately respond to Sputnik for comment on the matter.

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

FBI Raids New York Properties Tied to Russian Businessman Viktor Vekselberg - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - Federal agents searched two properties in New York linked to sanctioned Russian businessman Viktor Vekselberg, NBC reported on Thursday citing people familiar with the matter.

The report said federal agents with the FBI and ICE's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) were seen carrying boxes during a search at a high-rise on Park Avenue in Manhattan and at an estate in Southampton that are reportedly linked to Vekselberg, according to records.

Sources told NBC that the searches are in connection to ongoing investigations.

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 Prosecutors Say Suspect in Dutch Soldiers Shooting in Indiana Charged With Murder

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - The man suspected in the shooting of three Dutch soldiers in the US state of Indiana has been charged with murder and attempted murder after killing one and injuring the other two soldiers, the Marion County Prosecutor's Office said on Thursday.

"Today, Prosecutor [Ryan] Mears and [Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department] announced Shamar Duncan has been charged for his alleged role in the Aug. 27 shooting that resulted in the death of Simmie Poetsema and injured two others. Duncan faces charges of Murder, two counts of Attempted Murder and Disorderly Conduct," the prosecutor's office said via social media.

The three members of the Dutch Commando Corps were shot last weekend outside their hotel where they resided to undergo training at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center. The incident prompted US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin to offer condolences to his Dutch counterpart Kaja Ollongren.

Duncan, 22, is alleged to have shot the soldiers after bumping into each other on the street in an area known for its bar and drinking scene, Assistant Indianapolis Police Chief Chris Bailey said on Thursday during a news conference.

Both of the surviving Dutch soldiers are expected to make full recoveries, with one of them having already returned to the Netherlands, Deputy Police Chief Kendale Adams 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.

Republican Lawmakers Request Briefing on US Oil Sales to China, Hunter Biden Link - Letter

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - Republican lawmakers are requesting a briefing from the US Department of Energy (DOE) on the sale of national oil reserves to a Chinese company with links to presidential family member Hunter Biden, according to a letter sent by the lawmakers to the DOE on Thursday.

According to the DOE, the Biden administration recently sold almost a million barrels of Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) oil to a subsidiary of Sinopec.

"In addition to concerns with Hunter Biden, the President's son, receiving money from the deal, the decision to sell to Unipec is troubling because Chinese firms are supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In order to ensure the American people that the Biden Administration is properly managing the sale of critical assets from the SPR and not supporting Russia by providing oil to China, we request a briefing and documents related to this matter," the letter said.

The lawmakers requested the DOE brief them on the SPR sale to China, as well as provide information on any analysis done on whether the sale could be used to assist Russia in Ukraine, the letter also said.

The letter was signed by Oversight and Reform Committee Ranking Member James Comer and Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Liberties Ranking Member Nancy Mace. The lawmakers addressed the letter to DOE Secretary Jennifer Granholm.

Hunter Biden and his investment vehicles have held equity in Sinopec, and appear to have a continued financial interest in the company, Comer said in a July letter to Granholm. The connection raises "serious questions" about the motivation behind selling oil from the SPR to Sinopec and whether DOE was aware of the link, Comer said.

Sinopec, a state-run energy company, is a major producer and purchaser of petroleum products for China. Parent company Sinopec Group is one of the largest oil conglomerates in the world and run by China's State 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.

US Jobless Claims Hit 2-Month Lows Smoothing Fed Path for September Interest Rate Hike

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - Unemployment claims in the United States hit two-month lows last week, according to US Labor Department data on Thursday that indicated a clearer path for the Federal Reserve to continue with interest rate hikes to rein in runaway inflation.

"In the week ending August 27, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 232,000, a decrease of 5,000 from the previous week's revised level," the Labor Department said in a news release.

Historical data from the Labor Department showed that this is the lowest number of filings for jobless benefits since the week that ended on June 25.

The weekly jobless statistics came ahead of Friday's important nonfarm payrolls report for the months of August. Economists have said they think some 300,000 payrolls were probably added last month - versus 471,000 last in July - holding the unemployment rate steady at 3.5% for a second straight month. A jobless rate of 4% or below is seen by the Fed as full employment.

"After running higher in the early summer, the trend in jobless claims has seen a reversal," economist Greg Michalowski said in a post on the Forex Live platform.

The Fed is keeping a close watch on all labor data to gauge how much tolerance the job market will have toward higher interest rates.

US inflation has been running at around four-decade highs since late last year, although the closely-watched Consumer Price Index slowed to an annualized rate of 8.5% in July from a peak of 9.1% in June.

The Fed's target for inflation is a 2% per year and the central bank has vowed to raise interest rates as much as necessary to achieve that.

Jobs data has been inconsistent over the past week, confounding economists on what the future holds for the labor market.

Tuesday's Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) report from the Labor Department showed US job openings at 11.2 million in July, versus 10.7 million in June.

However, a Wednesday report from private payrolls processor ADP showed US companies growing their workforce by only 132,000 in August, versus 268,000 in July.

"Our data suggests a shift toward a more conservative pace of hiring, possibly as companies try to decipher the economy's conflicting signals," ADP Chief Economist Nela Richardson said. "We could be at an inflection point, from supercharged job gains to something more normal."

Unemployment among Americans reached a record high rate of 14.8% in April 2020, with the loss of some 20 million jobs after the coronavirus breakout. Since, hundreds of thousands of jobs have been added every month, with the trend not letting up in July despite a negative 0.6% growth in second quarter gross domestic product this year, after a minus 1.6% in the first quarter that together accounted for a recession.

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 on Foiling Attack on Zaporizhzhia NPP Says Russia Did What Needed to Protect Inspectors

UNITED NATIONS, September 1 (Sputnik) - Russia did what it needed to do to protect International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors visiting the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant when it foiled an attempt by Ukrainian troops to seize the plant, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said on Thursday.

Earlier in the day, 60 Ukrainian paratroopers attempted to seize the ZNPP, according to local authorities. The majority of Ukrainian soldiers were neutralized, while 12 remain blocked.

"We are glad that the Russian Federation did what it needed to do to keep our inspectors safe," Dujarric said during a press briefing.

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.

Two Ex-Trump Lawyers to Appear Before Federal Grand Jury About January 6 Events - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - Two former lawyers for ex-US President Donald Trump are expected to go before a federal grand jury that is investigating the events at the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, ABC News reported.

"Former White House counsel Pat Cipollone and former deputy White House counsel Pat Philbin were subpoenaed by a federal grand jury investigating the Jan. 6 attack on the US Capitol and efforts to overturn the 2020 election, ABC News reported last month," the report said.

The move to subpoena the two has signaled an even more dramatic escalation in the Justice Department's investigation into the January 6 events than previously known, the report said. Cipollone previously appeared before the US House Select Committee investigating the January 6 events and had an extended closed-door interview. The Select Committee aired some of those exchanged during two of the panel's recent public hearings.

Cipollone and Philbin have already agreed to and taken part in interviews with the FBI regarding how Trump handled allegedly classified documents, according to reports.

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.

Austin Discusses European Security, Ukraine With Danish Counterpart at Pentagon

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Danish counterpart Morten Bodslov on Thursday met at the Defense Department in Washington to discuss European security, the situation in Ukraine and a new bilateral defense cooperation agreement.

"Denmark continues to be a close and long-standing ally to the United States, and today we proudly stand with you in the face of Russian aggression that threatens Europe's freedom and security," Austin in opening remarks at the start of the meeting. "So, Mister Minister, I want to

thank you for everything that you're doing to support the Ukrainian people and their military in their hour of need."

Bodskov said that the United States and Denmark have also begun talks on a bilateral defense cooperation agreement to further deepen ties.

The Danish Defense Minister noted that the US military's presence in Europe is vital for the peace in the region.

Bodskov is visiting the United States in part to signal that Denmark will continue to support Ukraine, including through increased military presence in the Baltic region.

Earlier this year, Denmark announced plans to send 800 additional soldiers to the Baltic countries.

The European nations met in Copenhagen earlier this week and agreed to provide \$1.5 billion in additional aid for Ukraine.

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

US House Oversight Committee Reaches Agreement With Trump on Financial Documents Subpoena

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) – The US House Committee on Oversight and Reform has reached an agreement with former President Donald Trump to obtain key financial documents that he refused to provide under a subpoena, according to a release on Thursday. "After facing years of delay tactics, the Committee has now reached an agreement with the former President and his accounting firm, Mazars USA, to obtain critical documents," Committee Chair Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney said in the release. "These documents will inform the Committee's efforts to get to the bottom of former President Trump's egregious conduct and ensure that future presidents do not abuse their position of power for personal gain." In April 2019, the committee issued a subpoena to Mazars for financial records as part of its investigation into Trump's conflicts of interest, self-dealing, and foreign financial ties. Trump subsequently filed a lawsuit to prevent Mazars from complying with the subpoena. On July 8, 2022, the Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit found that the committee was authorized to obtain certain financial records and communications from Trump and his business entities. Under the agreement reached by the committee, Trump will not further appeal the DC Circuit's ruling, and Mazars will comply with the subpoena.

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, EU Counterpart Discuss Afghanistan Crisis, Global Health - US State Dept.

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell on Thursday discussed by

telephone the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan and global health, State Department spokesperson Ned Price said.

"Secretary Blinken and High Representative Borrell discussed their shared commitment to support the Afghan people through Afghanistan's ongoing economic and humanitarian crises as well as the importance of working with the broader international community, to support the education of Afghan girls," Price said in a statement.

The two officials reaffirmed the importance of a successful Seventh Replenishment Conference for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which US President Joe Biden will host during the United Nations General Assembly in New York later this month, the statement said.

Price also confirmed the United States' commitment to helping the Global Fund reach its funding goals in order to more effectively fight HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as well as build resilient and sustainable health systems.

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 Denies Visas to Russian Delegation Bound for UN Summit of Interior Ministers - Envoy

UNITED NATIONS, August 30 (Sputnik) - The United States has not issued the requisite visas to the Russian delegation and has thus disrupted their participation at the UN Summit of Interior Ministers, Russian Ambassador to the United Nations Vasily Nebenzya said on Thursday.

"Due to the actions of the American side, the participation in the summit by the Russian delegation from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, headed by Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev, was disrupted. The representatives of the Russian Federation were not issued visas. This is yet another flagrant violation by the United States of its obligations under the UN Headquarters Agreement," Nebenzya said.

The Russian ambassador also pointed out that issuance of visas for delegates at United Nations events is not a privilege, but an international legal obligation of the United States.

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

Russia Requests UNSC Meeting on Zaporizhzhia NPP on September 6 - UN Envoy

UNITED NATIONS, September 1 (Sputnik) - Russia has requested a UN Security Council meeting on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant to be held on September 6, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Dmitry Polyanskiy said Thursday.

"In the light of the continued shelling of the #Zaporozhye NPP by Ukraine and today's reckless attempt by Kiev regime to derail the visit to the site of the IAEA mission we called for UN #SecurityCouncil briefing on Sep 6 with [International Atomic Energy Agency Director General] and [UN chief Antonio Guterres] as briefers," Polyanskiy wrote on social media.

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 - Billionaire Businessman Diller Severs Relationship With Dating App Tinder - Reports (Repeats to fix the amount of money Diller netted after tax to read \$1.3 billion, not \$1.13 billion, in para 3)

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - Billionaire founder and chairman of InterActiveCorp (IAC) Barry Diller officially broke up with dating app Tinder by selling his entire financial stake in its owner, Match Group, Forbes reported on Thursday.

Diller sold off his entire stake in Match Group – which also includes dating apps Hinge, OkCupid and Match.com in its portfolio – for approximately \$1.9 billion, the report said, citing Diller's family office.

Diller inconspicuously sold the stocks throughout 2021, earning roughly \$1.3 billion after taxes, according to the report.

Diller held 16.1 million Match Group shares after the organization split from IAC as a public company in July 2020, the report said. However, Match Group and Tinder have since engaged in legal battles, with the latter claiming to have been undervalued during acquisition, the report also said.

Diller avoided a turbulent period for Match Group by selling stock in 2021, with the stock's value having fallen by nearly 60% in 2022, according to the report.

The sale brings Diller's net worth to approximately \$4 billion, the report 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.

Billionaire Businessman Diller Severs Relationship With Dating App Tinder - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - Billionaire founder and chairman of InterActiveCorp (IAC) Barry Diller officially broke up with dating app Tinder by selling his entire financial stake in its owner, Match Group, Forbes reported on Thursday.

Diller sold off his entire stake in Match Group – which also includes dating apps Hinge, OkCupid and Match.com in its portfolio – for approximately \$1.9 billion, the report said, citing Diller's family office.

Diller inconspicuously sold the stocks throughout 2021, earning roughly \$1.3 billion after taxes, according to the report.

Diller held 16.1 million Match Group shares after the organization split from IAC as a public company in July 2020, the report said. However, Match Group and Tinder have since engaged in legal battles, with the latter claiming to have been undervalued during acquisition, the report also said.

Diller avoided a turbulent period for Match Group by selling stock in 2021, with the stock's value having fallen by nearly 60% in 2022, according to the report.

The sale brings Diller's net worth to approximately \$4 billion, the report 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.

Half of US Registered Voters View FBI Raid of Trump Residence as 'Legal,' 'Proper' – Poll

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) – Fifty-two percent of US registered voters see the FBI's August 8 raid of Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence as "part of a legal and proper investigation" into whether the former president was involved in wrongdoing, according to a poll by The Wall Street Journal out Thursday.

In contrast, 41% saw the raid as part of a witch hunt led by Democrats and the Biden administration. Of this group, four in five respondents were Republicans.

While 51% of overall voters said the raid would not impact the likelihood that they would vote in the upcoming midterm elections, 64% of Republicans said they would be more likely to vote.

The poll was conducted on August 17-25 by Impact Research and Fabrizio, Lee & Associates, surveying 1,313 registered voters.

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.

Webb Telescope Takes First Ever Direct Image of Exoplanet Outside Solar System - NASA

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - The James Webb Space Telescope deployed a million miles from Earth has successfully taken the first ever direct image of a planet orbiting another star light years away from the Solar System, NASA announced in a press release on Thursday.

"For the first time, astronomers have used NASA's James Webb Space Telescope to take a direct image of a planet outside our solar system," the release said. "The exoplanet is a gas giant, meaning it has no rocky surface and could not be habitable."

The massive exoplanet is called HIP 65426 b and it is six-to-twelve times the mass of Jupiter, the release said.

"Astronomers discovered the planet in 2017 using the SPHERE instrument on the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope in Chile and took images of it using short infrared wavelengths of light. Webb's view, at longer infrared wavelengths, reveals new details that ground-based telescopes would not be able to detect," the release added.

HIP 65426 b is about 100 times farther from its host star than Earth is from the Sun, according to the release.

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 Admin. to Discontinue Humanitarian Quick Entry Into US for Afghans - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - The Biden administration will no longer offer entry into the United States to Afghans who are considered to be at risk under humanitarian "parole" starting October 1, CBS News reported, citing a senior administration official.

Parole, which offers a quick option rather than the year-long processes for obtaining visas or refugee status, would be limited to a very small number of exceptional cases, the report said. Instead, the Biden administration will focus on resettling Afghan evacuees who qualify for permanent legal status, the report said.

Since the United States withdrew from Afghanistan in August 2021, it has resettled about 86,000 Afghans under the so-called "Operation Allies Welcome." Some 90% of them came in through the parole process.

The upcoming "Operation Enduring Welcome" will only resettle Afghans who are immediate family members of US citizens, permanent residents and evacuees resettled over the past year, the report said.

In addition, Afghans who qualify for a special immigrant visa because of their service during the US war in Afghanistan or who are considered the most vulnerable applicants in the refugee programs will also be resettled, the report also said.

The purpose of discontinuing parole was to ensure that all Afghans coming to the United States would have a direct pathway to permanent residency, which is not offered through parole, the report added.

Parole usually offers the legal right to live and work in the United States for two years only, according to the report.

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.

Apple, Google Plan to Produce Some Next Generation Smartphones Outside of China - Reports

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) - Tech companies Apple and Google intend to produce a portion of their next generation of smartphones outside of factories in China in response to geopolitical and supply chain concerns, The New York Times reported on Thursday.

A small number of Apple's latest iPhone models will be produced in India, while a part of the Google Pixel phone's production will take place in Vietnam, the report said, citing people familiar with the companies' plans.

Apple and Google are set to unveil the new generation of smartphones in the coming weeks, according to the report.

China remains the largest manufacturer of consumer electronics, but products from western companies are increasingly being produced in other countries, the report said. Apple and Microsoft began shipping electronic devices from Vietnam, while Amazon began producing Fire TV devices in India – all products made in China several years ago, according to the report.

The production shift comes in response to worries about geopolitical tensions and pandemic-related disruptions of the supply chain involving China in the last few years, the report

said. Manufacturers fear that basing their supply chains in China risks uncertainty amid increasing tensions between Washington and Beijing, the report said. Tensions have risen following US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's trip to Taiwan, including an increase in military activity around the island and adjacent strait. The Biden administration has defended the lawmaker's visit, while China has condemned it as a violation of sovereignty.

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 Pledges \$80Mln for Food Security in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Sahel

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) – The United States will provide \$80 million to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to strengthen food security in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Sudan, Burkina Faso and the Sahel region, US Representative to the UN Agencies in Rome Cindy McCain said on Thursday.

"I am pleased to announce \$80 million in additional funding to FAO to bolster emergency & resilience programs in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Sudan, Burkina Faso and the Sahel," McCain wrote on social media.

Through the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the US will improve availability and access to food by supplying aid and technical assistance to small-holder farmers and livestock dependent communities, she added.

"These funds will be used to help the most vulnerable people displaced by ongoing conflicts and climate disasters," McCain noted.

She also reiterated US commitment to partnership with FAO and to addressing the food crisis worldwide.

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.

Twitter Testing New 'Edit Button' Feature

WASHINGTON, September 1 (Sputnik) – Twitter announced Thursday that it is internally testing an edit button, which will be offered to Twitter Blue paid subscribers later this month.

"if you see an edited Tweet it's because we're testing the edit button," the company tweeted. It noted on its blog that editing was the "most requested feature to date."

Users will have 30 minutes after publishing a tweet to edit it a few times, such as fixing typos and adding tags. Edited tweets will be publicly labelled and readers can access their edit history. The company plans to study how Twitter Blue subscribers use the edit button before it is made universally available across the platform.