

10/12/23 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.

CIA Finally Admits 1953 Coup of Iran's Mohammed Mossadeq 'Countered' Democracy

While it has long been known that the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) played a key role in orchestrating the fall of Iranian Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadeq in August 1953, only recently has the espionage agency admitted that doing so was a violation of democratic norms. The admission came on [a recent episode](#) of "The Langley Files," a podcast produced by the CIA and named after its Virginia headquarters.

Published last month, the episode was the first of two that discussed the CIA's role in rescuing six American diplomats from Tehran during the 1979 siege of the US embassy. However, it also contains a commentary on the events of 1953, which in many ways set in motion the Islamic Revolution of 1979 that caused the siege.

At one point, CIA spokesman and podcast host Walter Trosin claims that most of the CIA's clandestine operations have "bolstered" popularly-elected governments, but he goes on to say that "we should acknowledge, though, that this is, therefore, a really significant exception to that rule," referring to the August 1953 coup.

Agreeing, CIA historian Brent Geary replies: "This is one of the exceptions to that."

However, Geary quickly turns the corner on the admission, saying that "in the macro sense, the argument it wasn't about democracy in Iran from Eisenhower's perspective, it was about defending democracy worldwide in that case because the Soviet Union bordered Iran."

Asked about the admission, the CIA told US media the "CIA's leadership is committed to being as open with the public as possible."

"The agency's podcast is part of that effort - and we knew that if we wanted to tell this incredible story, it was important to be transparent about the historical context surrounding these events, and CIA's role in it," the statement continued.

Oil or Democracy?

Since the late 19th century, Iran - then called Persia and under the rule of the Qajar dynasty - had been mostly in the British Empire's sphere of influence, with both London and St. Petersburg exerting a powerful sway over affairs in the late Qajar Empire. A liberal movement succeeded at creating a constitutional monarchy and Majlis in 1906, but expanding British interests in Persian oil resources led to London backing the Shah's power, especially after the Pahlavi dynasty took power in 1921.

After an assassin failed to kill Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in 1949, the monarch made a new grab for power by convening a previously-ignored Senate and staffing it with his own supporters.

The popular backlash was harnessed by the National Front and Mohammed Mossadeq, who became prime minister in 1951 after the electoral coalition won a majority in the Majlis.

Mossadeq moved to deepen Iran's democratic institutions and limit the Shah's power, and most

controversially in London and Washington, moved to nationalize British and American oil assets, which he saw as giving the two foreign powers undue influence over Iranian politics.

The [UK and US reacted harshly](#) to Mossadeq's moves, with the Truman and Eisenhower administrations characterizing Mossadeq as a communist who would turn a key Middle Eastern nation into a Soviet ally at a time the US was trying to encircle the USSR with anti-communist military alliances such as NATO.

Washington's role [in Operation Ajax](#), the 1953 plot to create a fake "revolution" that would overthrow Mossadeq and return the Shah to power, was admitted to the world in 1979 by Kermit Roosevelt Jr., the grandson of US President Theodore Roosevelt, who wrote that he had personally directed the coup on the CIA's behalf from inside Tehran.

Ironically, the admission came as the most direct blowback from the operation was already unfolding in Iran: the 1979 revolution that overthrew Shah Reza Pahlavi and declared a republic. After the Shah's return to power in 1953, he became a key US ally against the USSR, receiving [top-of-the-line weapons](#) and crushing any attempts at reforming his undemocratic, secular, right-wing government using his secret police, the SAVAK. [Mass civil demonstrations](#) against his rule began in 1977 as a growing working class and urban intelligentsia grew too powerful for him to control, and he fled the country in January 1979.

17 August 2020, 13:03 GMT

Shiite Muslim religious leader [Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini](#) emerged as the leader of the revolution after students laid siege to the US embassy in Tehran and the US attempted to mount a rescue operation, which failed, casting Washington as a threat to the revolution and evoking memories of 1953, which Khomeini pledged to prevent from recurring.

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.

Which US Celebrities Have Made Statements About New Israeli-Palestinian Violence?

The fighting between Israeli and Palestinian forces has killed more than 2,500 people since Saturday, with thousands more injured and some 300,000 displaced in Gaza, one of the world's most densely populated territories.

The latest outbreak of fighting between Israelis and Palestinians began on Saturday with Hamas' Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, which shocked the world with huge rocket volleys and an unprecedented sally from the Gaza Strip and killing of hundreds of civilians in nearby Israeli border towns. The tide has since turned, and the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have relentlessly bombed the Gaza Strip for days, severing electricity, water, and fuel to the densely populated territory, killing more than 1,400.

With the world's attention turned to the southern Levant and the deaths and suffering on both sides, celebrities have felt compelled to issue statements on social media expressing their solidarity with one side or the other, or to simply wish for an end to the violence and for the victims to find peace.

Here is an incomplete list of how some of America's most famous figures have sounded off about the conflict:

Some came down firmly on the side of Israel, expressing their support for the Israeli government and the IDF.

Israeli actress Gal Godot, who once served a conscription round in the IDF and is a vocal supporter, stayed true to form, posting “The world cannot sit on the fence when these horrific acts of terror are happening!”

Barbara Streisand, the Jewish American singer who once [performed Hatikvah](#), the Israeli national anthem, for then-Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, posted a message saying she had been “shocked and shaken” by the killings of Jews and the taking of hostages by Hamas, calling it “brutality without humanity or compassion” and wishing for the safe return of the hostages. Jewish American Natalie Portman also gave her support to “the people of Israel,” saying “I am in horror at these barbaric acts and my heart is pounding with love and prayer for the families of all affected.”

American singer Madonna, who isn’t Jewish but is known throughout the Jewish world as one of the rare non-Jews who celebrates Jewish holidays and studies the mystical discipline of Kabbalah, gave her support to the families of Israeli victims as well, saying she was praying for “all who are suffering or who will suffer from this conflict.”

“I am aware that this is the work of Hamas and there are many innocent people in Palestine who do not support this terrorist organization,” she wrote. “This Tragic attack will only cause more suffering for everyone.”

Another non-Jew who dabbles in Jewish culture is Canadian singer Justin Bieber, who is reported to [say the Shema](#), the Jewish declaration of faith, before each concert with his Jewish manager, attempted to post in solidarity with Israel. He posted a black-and-white image with the text “Praying for Israel” over it, but as many pointed out afterward, the photo is of bombing damage in Gaza caused by the IDF.

Mia Khalifa, a Lebanese-American Catholic who became known for her adult film career but has since become known as a vocal defender of Palestinian militants, offered a cheeky response that infuriated many of her followers.

“Can someone please tell the freedom fighters in Palestine to flip their phones and film horizontal,” she posted.

Following outrage, Khalifa later clarified: “I just want to make it clear that this statement in no way shape or form is [inciting] spread of violence. I specifically said freedom fighters because that’s what the Palestinian citizens are... fighting for freedom every day.”

Palestinian-American model Gigi Hadid, who has long been an outspoken supporter of the Palestinian struggle, adopted a more even-handed tone for her recent statement, saying that “the terrorizing of innocent people is not in alignment with & does not do any good for the ‘Free Palestine’ movement. The idea that it does has fueled a painful, decades-long cycle of back&forth retaliation (which no innocent civilian, Palestinian or Israeli, deserves to be a casualty of) and helps perpetuate the idea that being pro-Palestine = antisemitic.”

Actor Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson similarly expressed support for those suffering on both sides, saying “the growing loss of innocent Israeli and Palestinian lives is heart-wrenching as this war escalates to immense proportions.”

“I pray for compassion and resolve. I pray for all innocent lives,” he added.

American Actress Susan Sarandon didn't make a statement, but notably reshared a number of older posts on her social media in which she expressed her support for Palestine and opposition to Israeli strikes in Gaza.

The Kardashian sisters issued a series of statements, starting with Kylie Jenner sharing a post by the pro-Israeli organization Stand With Us that included an image of the Israeli flag and said "Now and always, we stand with the people of Israel!" After the post was flooded with pro-Palestine comments, Jenner deleted the post and offered no further comment.

Kris Jenner and Chloe and Kourtney Kardashian later issued a joint statement condemning Hamas as a "terrorist organization" and calling on non-Jews to check in on their Jewish friends "given the thousands of years of persecution of Jews."

Kim, on the other hand, made her own post that did not mention Israel, Palestinians, or Hamas, but said "I take the side of humanity. No one should suffer at the hands of a terrorist."

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.

Activist: Damage 'Already Done' by False Stories of Atrocities, Despite Media Corrections

Misconceptions about the conflict between Israel and Palestine abound, including when the conflict started and even what it's about. One musician and activist told Sputnik that such manipulation was concealing a potent truth about the conflict: the US can no longer guarantee Israel's safety.

Since Hamas [launched a surprise sally](#) from the Gaza Strip to attack nearby Israeli towns on Saturday, lurid reports of atrocities committed by the group have spread through the media. While more than 1,000 Israelis have been killed, the vast majority whom were civilians, many of the most extreme claims have [since been retracted](#), including that Hamas militants slit the throats of Jewish babies and that they raped Jewish women in the border settlements. After repelling the Palestinian militants from Israeli territory, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have [launched a massive air bombardment](#) of the Gaza Strip aimed at destroying Hamas as an organization, which has killed more than 1,400 people so far, and is massing hundreds of thousands of troops for a likely ground assault on the densely populated territory.

American rapper and activist Immortal Technique [told Sputnik](#) on Friday that manipulation of narratives in the media has long surrounded the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including giving the public a limited understanding of the context of particular events, such as atrocities committed by one side against the other.

"Well, I mean, I think that in politics, it just goes in the direction that when a country or their satellite republics commit an atrocity, that isn't highlighted, but when the opposing side does something that is a violation of international law or commits a crime, then it becomes the headline for days. And sometimes we find out later on that that crime may or may not be true," he said.

"For example, in Syria, there were mixed reports of who was using chemical weapons until we found out everybody was using illegal munitions. And then later on, we have this conversation

about Hamas decapitating 40 babies. And just last night, the Israeli Army released a report that says they cannot confirm that and now they've backed completely off of that report.”

“Now, this doesn't mean that there haven't been atrocities, this doesn't mean that there haven't been dead people. But this definitely means that we're being manipulated, in a sense, to feel sympathy or empathy for one group of people while completely demonizing another group of people. And that's par for the course for American media,” the activist noted.

'It Didn't Start Yesterday'

The rapper and activist noted that another method of manipulation is for the media to ignore the larger context of an event, such as the history of a conflict.

“So for the past 75 years, there have been people dying in Gaza and all over Palestine. And then people want to pretend that this conflict started yesterday. It didn't start yesterday and it didn't start three days ago. This is something that has been going on for incredibly long periods of time.”

“But it's important for us to know that even though this has been going on, it's also damaging for someone to say, ‘Oh, that conflict is thousands of years old.’ Well, there's been war in that place for thousands of years. You could point to any place in Europe and say the same thing. But the difference is that this has tried to be framed as a ‘religious conflict.’ And I believe that that's wrong, because that erases the millions of Jewish people that are opposed to Zionism and that are opposed to the illegal open-air prison that is Gaza. It also erases the 20% of Palestinians that happen to be Christian - and some of them are dying in Gaza, too. So we have to be very careful about whether to label it one thing or another and to always provide some kind of historical context to all of these things that are going on.”

Some Will Repeat Misinfo 'For the Rest of Their Life'

Turning to the question of fake news reports from the conflict being spread through the media, Immortal Technique recalled the quote commonly attributed to the Nazi propaganda chief Joseph Goebbels: “Repeat a lie often enough and it becomes the truth.”

“When a lie gets repeated enough times, the truth almost takes a backseat to what it was. So for your listeners to understand, let's take it to a context of history. After 9/11, there was a video that was circulated that was purported to be Palestinian children cheering the Twin Towers collapsing. And later on, they found out that that video was from 1992, and those children were cheering the return of [Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser] Arafat from exile. And it was a disgusting display of the type of manipulation that happens, because at that point, no one cared. Americans were furious. They felt like they had been caught off-guard. There was no conversation about whether [Al-Qaeda* leader Osama] bin Laden had ever worked for the CIA or what his job was in terms of helping toppling regimes.”

“So I think once the propaganda is out, the damage has already been done. There are people now that will repeat, ‘Oh, Hamas beheads babies’ for the rest of their life and it won't matter that the Israeli Army itself came out and said that's not true. They're going to hold on to that forever. And unfortunately, when you talk about what the long-term effects of this are, you're talking about a situation in which people who may not even have anything to do with it now become targets of retribution and all measures of violence,” he said.

“So I think that that affects not just the people, but also other individuals that are in proximity as well, which I think is is another topic to bring up, because it does look like the war, if it doesn't end up being curtailed or they don't find some immediate solution, is most likely going to

expand. I mean, Israel is already blaming Iran for giving drone technology to Hamas. Hezbollah has stated that if a ground invasion occurs, that it will participate in a war against Israel. That being said, that also means that Lebanon as a whole will probably be drawn into the conflict and so will the remainder of what is Syria.”

'American Can No Longer Protect Israel'

“I think that's what bothers a lot of people in the region, whether they're supporters of Palestine or even the people that support Israel that are just listening to this show rolling their eyes and saying, 'Man, I just want to hear what the other side says.' You know, they have to come to terms with some horrific news, not just that they were attacked. But here's the more crucial part of what we're going to say today, ma'am: they have to come to terms with the idea that America can no longer protect Israel. It can give it weapons, can 'defend itself,' it could even buy them a shield, but it cannot stop missiles and bombs from hitting Israel.”

“The only people that seemingly can do that would be a coalition of larger states. That would have to include Russia and that would have to include China. And that's the reality that they're waking up with today: not just the fact that this war exposed 75 years of occupation, but can the United States have influence over Iran? No. Can the United States have influence over Syria, Lebanon and the rest of these places as [easily] as its other world controlling counterparts? No. So therefore, it has to expand its cooperation with the region. This is going to affect the war in Ukraine. This is going to affect the situation in Taiwan. It's going to affect every major conflict that exists.”

“And whoever creates this peace deal, if the United States is not in it and presently involved, it loses more face than if it lost a war, because the Israeli-Palestinian issue has been at the forefront of political violence, instability, and an example of an imbalanced conflict and a retribution or state for the better part of 75 years. And if the Chinese and the Russians could come solve a problem the way that they solved the Yemen war - which the United States could have stopped at any time - then it'll be the ultimate coup. It'll be worse than when they lost Cuba. It'll be such a slap in the face to the foreign policy department that they may never recover.”

“And that's just the truth, because now it needs to be said that: what is the goal here? To the Israelis, to the ones that support Israel that are listening to this show: what's the United States' plan for you? To put you on the front lines of World War 3 like a crash test dummy? I mean, you certainly must be looking at the clock now and saying, 'Jesus, I really have made a partnership with maybe the wrong people. Now I have to expand what I believe global partnership really looks like and I may have to declare the Palestinian territories their own state. That way they get their own airport there, their own region, and we're guaranteed security by apparently the only people that can guarantee security because the United States can send a gigantic freighter or aircraft carrier there,’” the activist said.

“But again, all it [the US] can do is the same thing it does here when it polices people: it doesn't stop crime, right? The police don't jump in front of bullets here. Rarely. What they do is they go and punish the people that do it in the hopes that they'll never do it again. And, ma'am, that has not worked since 1776, it hasn't worked since the Laws of Moses - it's never worked for human beings. So obviously, there's a lot of re-analysis that people in Palestine have to make. But also the people of Israel have to make some decisions now and say, 'hey, we have to expand our global partnerships to include maybe the people that we didn't want to have a conversation with

before. We think we can only talk to the United States. We don't have to talk to China and Russia anymore.' Well, now you have to talk to the two of them because there's no other way to make peace now. You can't make it with only the United States."

For more in-depth analysis on the issue, check out our [The Backstory podcast](#).

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.

Sunlight Could Potentially Be Used to Melt Moon Dust Into Roads, Landing Pads - Study

While no human has stepped foot on the moon since NASA's Apollo 17 mission in 1972, several countries have since landed unmanned vehicles and deployed rovers on the lunar surface. Scientists may be able to use sunlight to melt moon dust into roads and landing pads for future missions, a new study has detailed.

Officials have determined that a 2.37-square-meter (25.5 square feet) lens could potentially be used to focus sunlight to melt moon or lunar dust into a hard substance that could be used by future missions to the moon.

Lunar dust has long been considered the bane of lunar missions since the lack of an atmosphere on the moon, low gravity and the fine properties of moon dust means the dust gets everywhere, degrading space suits, clogging machinery and damaging scientific equipment. By melting the moon dust, missions would have a hard surface to land and operate.

The issues with lunar dust are not theoretical. During the Apollo 17 mission, astronaut Gene Cernan snapped a picture following three moonwalks. The dust, which had already begun to eat through the astronauts' gloves and suits, covered Cernan, making him look like a futuristic space miner.

To conduct their experiment, researchers used a material called EAC-1A, which the European Space Agency developed specifically to mimic lunar soil. Officials used a 50 millimeter (mm) diameter laser to heat the dust to 1,600 degrees Celsius (2,912 degrees Fahrenheit), melting it into triangle shapes 25 mm across over an hour. The shapes, they showed, could be used to create solid surfaces that has the ability to serve as roads and landing pads.

At the rate they estimate the lens could work, it would take about 100 days to create a 10 by 10 meter landing pad.

"It sounds like forever, but think about constructions on Earth," said professor Jens Günster, co-author of the study. "Sometimes it takes forever to get a new junction built."

While the roads and landing pads would help protect future missions, the lens itself would have no such benefit. "When you accumulate dust on the lens it will sooner or later not function any more," said Günster. He noted that a vibrating mechanism could help mitigate that issue.

While Martian dust and lunar dust have different properties, the moon is not the only place where NASA finds itself combating dust. In 2019, the Opportunity Mars Rover was declared dead after a monthslong dust storm covered its solar panels.

The recent findings were [published](#) Thursday in the journal Scientific 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.

Embattled US Sen. Menendez Comes Under Fire With New FARA Charges

Since corruption allegations first surfaced, Menendez has continued to proclaim that he has always fought for human rights in Egypt, adding that "piling" new charges against him would not verify the bribery claims.

US Sen. Bob Menendez (D-NJ) and his wife Nadine are facing additional charges for allegedly accepting bribes from a foreign government and acting as a foreign agent - all while the politician served as the chairman to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The new charges, revealed in a [superseding indictment](#), are in addition to corruption charges brought last month. The new indictment alleges Menendez "provided sensitive US government information and took other steps that secretly aided the government of Egypt."

Menendez is facing an additional two years for conspiracy for a public official to act as a foreign agent.

The indictment specifically mentions "foreign military sales" and alleges the relationship between Menendez and Egyptian officials was developed with the aim of using the senator's influence to release roughly \$2.5 billion in foreign military aid that the US was holding from Egypt over human rights concerns.

Menendez was the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and helped oversee billions of dollars of aid sent to Egypt. He has since ["temporarily"](#) stepped down from that position, as required by Democratic caucus rules.

Three other defendants are named in the indictment, New Jersey businessmen Jose Uribe, Fred Daibes and Wael Hana.

Central to the government's accusations is Hana. According to the indictment, Hana allegedly helped arrange meetings between Menendez and Egyptian intelligence and military officials with the help of Nadine. Hana owns IS EG Halal Certified Inc (IS EG), which was granted exclusive rights by the Egyptian government to be the sole importer of halal meat to Egypt, despite having no previous experience with halal certification.

The indictment states IS EG had "little to no revenue" before 2019.

Prosecutors allege Menendez pressured a United States Department of Agriculture official to protect the IS EG monopoly.

The senator, who pleaded not guilty to the corruption charges last month, has continued to maintain his innocence and reject calls for his resignation from Congress.

"Piling new charge upon new charge does not make the allegations true. The facts haven't changed, only a new charge," Menendez said in a statement. "I again ask people who know me and my record to give me the chance to present my defense and show my innocence."

A lawyer representing Nadine also said in a statement that his client is innocent.

US Sen. John Fetterman (D-PA) remarked after the announcement of new charges that the Senate should opt to remove Menendez from office.

"We cannot have an alleged foreign agent in the United States Senate," Fetterman said in a statement. "It is time for every one of my colleagues in the Senate to join me in expelling Senator Menendez."

The Pennsylvania lawmaker was the first Democrat to demand Menendez resign after the corruption charges; however, an expulsion would require a two-thirds majority vote in the Senate.

Federal investigators found more than \$480,000 in cash, a Mercedes-Benz parked in his garage allegedly paid for by Uribe, and gold bars worth over \$100,000 inside the Menendez residence. The indictment also alleges that Menendez worked to block separate criminal cases against Uribe and Daibes.

Menendez claimed in his first public comments since the indictment last month that he hid the cash because of his family's Cuban background.

"For 30 years, I have withdrawn thousands of dollars in cash from my personal savings account, which I have kept for emergencies and because of the history of my family facing confiscation in Cuba," he said. "These were moneys drawn from my personal savings account based on the income I have lawfully derived over those 30 years."

Menendez was previously indicted in 2015 over alleged corruption involving a Florida eye doctor, but that case ultimately ended in a mistrial after jurors failed to agree on all counts.

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.

DeSantis to Shell Out \$2 Million in Iowa Ads Ahead of GOP Primary

The DeSantis campaign earlier announced in mid-July that it was firing a third of its staff in an effort to cut campaign costs. The latest staff culling came as the DeSantis camp struggled to gain traction among voters ahead of the 2024 US election.

The campaign of Florida Governor and Republican presidential hopeful Ron DeSantis is planning to spend \$2 million on buying ads in Iowa that will air mid-November and run through January 15, when the state's caucus is held.

The reported purchase makes the [DeSantis campaign](#) the first to buy ads in the state that will last until the state likely kicks off the presidential primary season (New Hampshire's date has not yet been set, though it is typically held in February).

Last week, the DeSantis campaign announced it was relocating a third of its staff to the Hawkeye State as it attempts to build momentum early in the primary season. Iowa is one of the states where DeSantis is performing relatively well, though he still trails former US President Donald Trump by roughly 30 points.

However, in other early primary states, namely New Hampshire and South Carolina, DeSantis has lost his second-place status to former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley following her strong performance in two Republican [primary debates](#).

The \$2 million ad buy marks a significant portion of the funds the DeSantis campaign has at its disposal. At the start of October, the campaign reported it had roughly \$5 million in cash on

hand, though the campaign also announced it raised an additional \$1 million less than 48 hours after it announced its third-quarter funding.

The campaign insists this rapid funding and campaign ad buy shows its previous financial woes are long behind it.

"We are in this for the long haul," DeSantis campaign manager James Uthmeier told US media, "and this ad buy is another demonstration to early-state voters that we are going to aggressively work to earn their support."

Despite trailing in the polls, the campaign says it plans to win in Iowa and then carry that momentum to the nomination.

"We're playing to win in Iowa, then on to New Hampshire, and we will have the resources needed to get the job done," DeSantis' deputy campaign manager David Polyansky said. "It is either Ron DeSantis or Donald Trump in Iowa ... and for the nomination," he added.

There has already been a massive amount of spending in the state by Republicans seeking the nomination, roughly \$49 million, though most of it comes from outside groups like PACs.

But PACs are legally forbidden from directly coordinating with candidates - even when they openly support one, meaning that while PACs can use footage from the campaign trail or from earlier in the candidate's career, they cannot appear in the ads directly. According to the campaign, the ad buy will allow DeSantis to speak directly to voters, giving those ads a more personal touch compared to PAC-funded ads.

Campaigns also get a better rate for their ads compared to PACs, allowing their dollars to be stretched further.

DeSantis is not the only campaign spending big directly in Iowa. South Carolina Senator Tim Scott leads the pack, spending \$6.4 million in the state. North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum is second, spending \$2.6 million of its campaign funds in Iowa.

According to poll aggregators, Scott and Burgum are currently 5th and 8th in the state, respectively.

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 Drama Rages as Scalise Withdraws After Failing to Secure Speakership Votes

US Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) was ousted last week from his position as House speaker in a historic vote, leaving the lower congressional chamber in complete chaos. Without leadership, work in the House of Representatives remains at a standstill until a new speaker is selected. The US House of Representatives appears further away from electing a new speaker after Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA) announced late Thursday that he would be withdrawing from the race, just one day after being officially nominated for the post by his party.

"I was very clear we have to have everybody put their agendas on the side and focus on what this country needs this country is counting on us," Scalise told reporters.

"But there's some folks that really need to look in the mirror over the next couple of days and decide are we going to get it back on track, or they're going to try to pursue their own agenda."

Scalise has indicated he will continue to act in his role as House majority leader but he has no plans to endorse another candidate for the speakership.

Earlier in the day, following more than two hours in a closed-door meeting, Republican lawmakers admitted that neither Scalise nor his opponent Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) came close to securing the 217 Republican votes needed to be confirmed as House speaker.

At least one Republican representative suggested the conservative party would have to reach out to their opponents across the aisle for help. Rep. Steve Womack (R-AR), who supports Scalise, remarked the only way he could have earned the votes he needs is if Democrats supported him either by voting for him or, more likely, voting “present” to lower the number needed for a majority.

“If [Democrats] want the floor to be open again,” Womack earlier told US media, “we’ve got to elect a speaker.”

However, Democrats would likely demand serious concessions for their help and there have been little to no signals from the minority party that they plan to help Republicans elect a speaker.

Republicans had planned to avoid the embarrassment of a repeat of Rep. Kevin McCarthy’s January election to the House, which took 15 rounds of voting, by holding a conference vote behind closed doors and then supporting whoever won.

Scalise narrowly beat out Jordan in that vote on Wednesday, but more than a dozen Republican lawmakers signaled they still would not support him during a full floor vote. Jordan has not withdrawn his bid for the speaker position.

Some Republican lawmakers have floated the idea of moving past the conference votes and starting the process of electing a speaker on the House floor. “This business of just having a struggle session doesn’t really work,” Rep. Andy Biggs (R-AZ) said. “We wandered around the barn about 10 times.”

“It’s time we start voting,” Rep. Andrew Ogles (R-TN) added.

During his lengthy confirmation process, McCarthy made several concessions to hardline Republicans who opposed his appointment, including the rule that allowed a single lawmaker to call for a vote to vacate the speaker position. That rule was used to [remove](#) McCarthy less than a year later.

Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK) and several other lawmakers told US media on Thursday that Scalise did not plan to make deals with those who oppose him like his predecessor did.

“No deals,” Cole said prior to Thursday’s meeting. “He’ll make it very clear today, ‘I’m not cutting deals with anybody.’”

However, Rep. Anna Paulina Luna (R-FL) said [earlier Wednesday](#) after a “personal meeting,” that she was “confident” Scalise would allow her to “aggressively pursue” the defunding of Jack Smith’s investigation into former US President Donald Trump’s alleged election interference, subpoenaing Hunter Biden - the son of US President Joe Biden, and bringing an impeachment vote of the elder Biden to the House floor. Prior to that meeting, Luna opposed Scalise’s appointment.

Lawmakers who opposed Scalise argued the party should not reward the House majority whip –whose primary job is to keep party members in line– with a promotion after the protracted fight over government funding and McCarthy’s ousting, which showed the party was anything but unified.

Other complaints included that Scalise did not have a plan to fund the government, and that he is was already making unrealistic promises to members, reflecting the way McCarthy governed the party.

Other lawmakers remain bothered about McCarthy's ousting and have signaled they plan to vote for the former speaker despite his assertion that he is not seeking the role.

Reps. Tom Emmer (R-MN) and Kevin Hern (R-OK) have been floated by some Republicans as potential alternatives to both Scalise and Jordan. Despite reports the two lawmakers are considering their options, they have both publicly denied they are actively seeking the role and have voiced their support for Scalise.

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.

Yellen, China Central Bank Governor Meet in Morocco - Treasury

WASHINGTON, October 13 (Sputnik) - US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen had a "substantive and productive" meeting with Chinese central bank governor Pan Gongsheng in Morocco on Friday, the Treasury said.

Marrakech is hosting annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group from October 9-15.

"During the substantive and productive meeting, Secretary Yellen and Governor Pan exchanged views on macroeconomic and financial developments. They also discussed the international financial architecture and debt issues, as well as how to make the Financial Working Group co-chaired by Treasury and the PBOC substantive and productive," the Treasury said in a statement.

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

Canada's Joly Will Visit Israel This Week to Discuss Humanitarian Efforts - Ministry

WASHINGTON, October 13 (Sputnik) - Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly will visit Israel and Jordan this week to reaffirm support for the Jewish state and discuss humanitarian efforts to protect civilians amid the Israel-Gaza war, Global Affairs said on Friday.

"The Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs, today announced that she will be travelling through Greece, to Israel and Jordan from October 13 to 15, 2023," the ministry said in a statement.

During her trip, the minister will reaffirm Canada's support for Israel and "its right to defend itself in accordance with international law," the statement said.

She will also discuss the impacts of Hamas' attack on Israel and the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Joly will reiterate the importance of respecting international humanitarian law, and push forward

collective efforts to ensure the swift and unimpeded passage of humanitarian aid, as well as the protection of Israeli and Palestinian civilians, the statement added.

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

Majority Leader Scalise Drops Out of Race to Become Next US House Speaker

WASHINGTON, October 13 (Sputnik) - House Speaker-nominee Steve Scalise said he dropped out of the race to become the next speaker of the House of Representatives.

"I just shared with my colleagues that I'm withdrawing my name as a candidate for speaker-designee," Scalise told reporters on Thursday.

Scalise was struggling to garner enough support to bring a full vote to the floor to become the next House speaker. This decision may open the path for Republican Congressman Jim Jordan to become the next House speaker, US media reported.

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

US Has No Credible Intelligence Indicating Threat to Homeland Amid Mideast Violence - DHS

WASHINGTON October 13, (Sputnik) - The US has no specific intelligence that would indicate the American homeland is under threat in light of the conflict between Israel and Hamas, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Counterterrorism Coordinator Nicholas Rasmussen said at a briefing.

"No specific credible intelligence indicating any potential threat to the homeland at this time," Rasmussen said on Thursday. "We are especially vigilant at this time, against the potential for violence here in the United States from a variety of threat actors who might be driven by anti-Semitic, Islamophobic and or anti-Arab sentiment."

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 Vice President Harris Advocates for Gun Control During Nevada College Tour

WASHINGTON, October 13 (Sputnik) - Vice President Kamala Harris went on a "Fight for Our Freedoms" college tour in Las Vegas, Nevada, and took part in a moderated discussion at the Southern Nevada's North Las Vegas campus, where she called for implementing a ban on so-called "assault weapons" and background checks for the purchase of firearms, the Office of the Vice President said.

Harris emphasized on Thursday the immediate need for tangible actions, such as implementing

the assault weapon ban, but also spotlighted the vital importance of addressing mental health problems among the youth, the office said.

Harris also said it is not "rocket science" about what young people need to do, referring to the need to enter the mental health profession, the office said.

In addition, Harris reflected on the issue of "gun violence," engaging with students as to whether they have been involved in active shooter drills, the office said.

Harris said she offers a message of optimism and empowerment and noted that the current reality can be changed, the office added.

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

Biden Administration May Revisit Decision to Not Send Troops to Israel - Reports

WASHINGTON, October 13 (Sputnik) - The Biden administration may revisit its decision to not send American troops to Israel amid its war with the Palestinian Hamas group, Politico reported citing a US official.

The report said on Thursday that although the United States has ruled out sending US troops to Israel, that decision is subject to change as US and Israeli leaders deal with the hostage situation.

Americans and Israelis are among the hostages being held by Hamas fighters after Saturday's attack.

According to the report, the hostage situation is exceedingly complex and challenging. The United States does not know where the hostages are located, the report added.

Earlier in the day, White House National Security Advisory John Kirby said Israel was not interested and did not welcome having US troops in Israel.

However, the Pentagon told Sputnik earlier this week that Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has placed US special operations forces on standby as they provide intelligence and planning support to Israel for now.

The United States currently has two carrier strike groups in the Eastern Mediterranean to deter any third party groups hostile to Israel from getting involved in the war.

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.

Ex-IRS Contractor Pleads Guilty to Disclosing Tax Info to News Outlets - US Justice Dept.

WASHINGTON, October 13 (Sputnik) - Former Internal Revenue Service (IRS) contractor Charles Littlejohn has pleaded guilty to one count of disclosing tax information without authorization, the US Justice Department said.

"An IRS contractor, Charles Littlejohn, 38, of Washington, DC, pleaded guilty today to disclosing tax return information without authorization," the US Justice Department said in a press release

said on Thursday.

The Justice Department alleges that Littlejohn stole tax return information about a high-profile public official, who US media reported was then-US President Donald Trump, while fulfilling his government contractual obligations at the IRS between 2018 and 2020, the release said.

After accessing the tax data and a number of other individuals, Littlejohn contacted an undisclosed news organization and provided them with Trump's tax returns between August 2019 and October 2019, the release said.

The stolen tax documents served as the basis for the publication of a number of articles in September 2020 by the news outlet about Trump's tax returns ahead of the 2020 presidential election, the release also said.

Moreover, in July and August 2020, Littlejohn also stole tax return information belonging to thousands of some of the wealthiest individuals in the United States and shared it with another news organization that published more than 50 articles using the stolen tax data, the release added.

The defendant was charged in September and pleaded guilty to unauthorized disclosure of tax return and return information and is scheduled to be sentenced on January 29, 2024, 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.

Man Fatally Shot by SF Police Identified After Crashing Into Chinese Consulate - Reports

SAN FRANCISCO, October 13 (Sputnik) - City officials identified San Francisco resident Zhanyuan Yang as the man who was shot and killed by police after ramming his car into the Chinese consulate building, the San Francisco Chronicle reported.

According to reports, the incident, which occurred on Monday near San Francisco's Japantown, involved a car crashing into the Chinese consulate-general building, which prompted China to urge the US for a swift investigation and enhanced safety for diplomatic personnel.

However, the motive behind the actions of Zhanyuan Yang, who was fatally shot by police and pronounced dead in a hospital, remains undisclosed, the report said.

Furthermore, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner conveyed that Yang's family has been informed of the incident, and city officials have chosen not to provide further commentary at this time, 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.

US Capitol Police Say Bolstering Security on Friday Amid Calls for Pro-Palestine Protests

WASHINGTON, October 13 (Sputnik) - The US Capitol Police (USCP) said in a statement to Sputnik that the law enforcement agency is bolstering security around the Capitol on Friday,

following calls for global protests in support of Palestine.

Earlier this week, former Hamas leader Khaled Mashal issued a statement calling for public demonstrations on Friday in support of Palestinians amid the conflict in Israel. Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel over the weekend, prompting the country to declare a state of war.

“Although there are not specific threats toward the Congress tomorrow, we are not taking any chances,” USCP told Sputnik on Thursday. “We are enhancing security throughout the Capitol Complex.”

Some of the increased security measures at the Capitol will be visible, while others will remain discreet for safety reasons, the statement added.

The FBI told Sputnik on Thursday that they are also tracking the call for pro-Palestine protests, which may lead to demonstrations in communities throughout the United States, according to the bureau.

“We are working closely with our law enforcement partners across the country to share information and identify and disrupt any threats that may emerge,” the FBI said in a statement.

The FBI encourages members of the public to remain vigilant to potential threats and report suspicious activity to law enforcement, the statement said.

Earlier on Thursday, US Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene suggested lawmakers cancel work at the Capitol on Friday amid a “global day of jihad” by Hamas. There are a dozen protests planned in Washington, only one of which is pro-Israel, Greene said.

Congressman Matt Gaetz said that his constituents will not be “intimidated” by the demonstrations. Floridians are “armed,” Gaetz noted.

Although Mashal mentioned jihad in his statement, the word is literally translated from Arabic as “struggling” and as a concept does not necessarily refer to warfare.

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 Rapporteur Says No Reply From Russia Ahead of Visit to Russian War Prisoners in Ukraine

UNITED NATIONS, October 13 (Sputnik) - The United Nations Special Rapporteur sent a letter to Russia prior to visiting Russian prisoners of war in Ukraine but received no reply from Moscow, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel Alice Jill Edwards said on Thursday.

“I sent a letter to the Russian authorities informing them that I was visiting Ukraine and part of my visit was to check and verify the status and conditions of treatment of Russian prisoners of war, giving them the opportunity to provide me with the names and other bio data and suspected places where those individuals may be being held by the Ukrainian authorities. And even then I received no reply,” Edwards told reporters during her briefing at the UN.

According to the Rapporteur, the Russian prisoners of war are treated in line with international humanitarian law.

The United Nations Special Rapporteurs are not fully representing and working under the United Nations. Often, therefore, their opinions may be slightly more forward or one-sided.

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, October 13 (Sputnik) -

ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

* The death toll from Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip has increased to 1,537 people, while more than 6,000 people have been wounded, the Palestinian Health Ministry said on Thursday.

* The US aircraft carrier Gerald R. Ford strike group will provide Israel with intelligence support and long-range strike options, a senior US Defense Department official said.

* Israeli airstrikes against the territory of Syria are a gross violation of sovereignty of the republic and the basic norms of international law, the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

* The number of US citizens killed in the Hamas attacks in Israel over the weekend has increased to 27, White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said.

GLOBAL ENERGY MARKETS

* Gas futures in Europe increased by 15%, reaching \$580 per 1,000 cubic meters, according to data from the London-based ICE exchange on Thursday.

* Pakistan expresses interest in Russian LNG supplies, both operational ones and for the future, Russian Energy Minister Nikolai Shulginov said.

* The United States is imposing sanctions on two entities and two vessels for allegedly transporting Russian oil sold above the West-led price cap, the Treasury said.

* OPEC has upgraded its forecast for oil and condensate production for 2023 outside the organization and expects an increase by 1.7 million barrels per day to 67.5 million barrels per day, according to its fresh monthly report.

* OPEC's oil production increased by 273,000 barrels per day in September compared to the August data and amounted 27.75 million barrels per day, according to the organization's fresh report.

CONFLICT IN UKRAINE

* - The Russian forces have repelled three Ukrainian attacks in the Donetsk direction in the past 24 hours, and Kiev's casualties have reached 340, the Russian Defense Ministry said on Thursday.

* Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's recent statement on Kiev entering a final stage of conflict with Moscow shows his hopelessness, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said.

RUSSIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

* Russia's external debt amounted to \$329.5 billion as of October 1, having decreased by \$54.1 billion or by 14% since the beginning of the year, the Russian Central Bank said.

* Russia and China are working on the possibility of concluding new agreements in the economic sphere during the planned visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to China, Deputy

Foreign Minister Andrey Rudenko said.

KYRGYZSTAN-RUSSIA RELATIONS

* Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Thursday that he expects the military cooperation between Moscow and Bishkek to strengthen in the interests of ensuring security of both countries.

* Russia and Kyrgyzstan are actively switching to payments in national currencies, the share of the ruble has reached 83%, Putin said.

* Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov said that he and Putin had noted during talks in Bishkek the positive role of the Russian military base in the Kyrgyz town of Kant in ensuring the security of the region.

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

US Congresswoman Greene Says House Republicans in 'Gridlock' Over Speaker Election

(Update: adds Scalise comments in paras 8-11)

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - US House Republicans have reached a gridlock over the election of a new speaker, Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene said on Thursday.

"I think everything's at a gridlock. It's a waste of time, continuing to go in there behind closed doors," Greene said during remarks to reporters. "We can fight this out on the House floor. I think we need to start voting."

Last week, the House of Representatives ousted Congressman Kevin McCarthy as speaker in a historic first. House lawmakers are unable to pass bills until they elect a new speaker or grant extraordinary powers to speaker pro tempore Patrick McHenry.

The lower chamber of Congress is currently leaderless amid efforts to support Israel and fund the federal government before November 17.

House Republicans nominated Majority Leader Steve Scalise as speaker in a closed-door meeting on Tuesday by a vote of 113-99. Scalise's primary challenger was Congressman Jim Jordan, whom several lawmakers have still pledged to support in a floor vote.

Scalise is still short of securing the 217 votes needed to be elected speaker, a congressional source told Sputnik earlier on Thursday.

Republicans held a conference meeting on Thursday to sort out the speakership election, but have so far failed to reach an agreement, according to Greene.

However, Scalise told reporters following the meeting that his support continues to grow as he works the gap in the Republican conference.

Republicans will convene in smaller groups to further discuss the situation before holding a vote on the House floor, Scalise said.

Scalise's speaker bid comes as the lawmaker also battles blood cancer, with which he was diagnosed earlier this year. Last month, Scalise said that the cancer has decreased following chemotherapy.

Greene has said that she will not support Scalise's speaker bid on account of his battle with

cancer, claiming that he should not sacrifice his health to serve in the leadership role.

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 Congresswoman Greene Says House Republicans in 'Gridlock' Over Speaker Election

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - US House Republicans have reached a gridlock over the election of a new speaker, Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene said on Thursday.

"I think everything's at a gridlock. It's a waste of time, continuing to go in there behind closed doors," Greene said during remarks to reporters. "We can fight this out on the House floor. I think we need to start voting."

Last week, the House of Representatives ousted Congressman Kevin McCarthy as speaker in a historic first. House lawmakers are unable to pass bills until they elect a new speaker or grant extraordinary powers to speaker pro tempore Patrick McHenry.

The lower chamber of Congress is currently leaderless amid efforts to support Israel and fund the federal government before November 17.

House Republicans nominated Majority Leader Steve Scalise as speaker in a closed-door meeting on Tuesday by a vote of 113-99. Scalise's primary challenger was Congressman Jim Jordan, whom several lawmakers have still pledged to support in a floor vote.

Scalise is still short of securing the 217 votes needed to be elected speaker, a congressional source told Sputnik earlier on Thursday.

Republicans held a conference meeting on Thursday to sort out the speakership election, but have so far failed to reach an agreement, according to Greene.

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.

News Media Canada Asks Government to Address Google Concerns on Online News Act – Reports

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) – News Media Canada has urged Ottawa to address Google's concerns over Bill C-18 – The Online News Act – which is set to come into force on December 19, the Globe and Mail reported on Thursday.

News Media Canada (NMC), the representative of news publishers such as The Globe and Mail, Toronto Star, Postmedia, and La Presse, has urged both sides to reach an agreement through regulations, and asked for the government to accommodate Google's concerns, the report said citing the organization.

NMC said that Google's submission expressed constructive and "good faith articulations" of what it characterized as legitimate concerns, the report said, adding that the organization agrees with several of the points raised.

A spokesperson for the Minister of Canadian Heritage Pascale St-Onge, said that Ottawa was

still conducting consultations on the matter ahead of releasing the agreed final rules, the report said.

On August 1, Meta (banned in Russia) announced an end to news availability on Canadian Facebook and Instagram platforms in response to the country's new law that requires tech companies to compensate news outlets for using their content.

Google, although it has strongly opposed the newly introduced legislation, left the doors open for negotiations for Canada to address some of its specific concerns in relation to the Bills content but stressed it would follow through its plan to pull Canadian news unless a compromise was found.

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

US Likely to Provide Israel More Iron Dome Munitions Than Initially Requested - Pentagon

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The United States is likely to provide Israel with more Iron Dome interceptors than was initially requested before the war, a senior US defense official said on Thursday.

"The requests for additional Iron Dome defense that we're discussing is most likely going to be above and beyond what Israel has already ordered," the official said during a conference call.

Moreover, the official said the United States is considering including small diameter bombs as part of military aid to Israel for use in its conflict with Palestinian Hamas fighters.

The first shipment of US military aid including munitions arrived in Israel earlier this week, according to the official.

The United States fully expects to see continuous delivery of US security assistance to Israel in respond to their requests, the official said.

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

US 'Ill-Prepared' to Face Nuclear Challenges From China, Russia - Congressional Report

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The United States is ill-prepared to deal with nuclear challenges from Russia and China, a congressional commission said in a report released on Thursday.

"Given current threat trajectories, our nation will soon encounter a fundamentally different global setting than it has ever experienced: we will face a world where two nations possess nuclear arsenals on par with our own," the report said. "In addition, the risk of conflict with these two nuclear peers is increasing. It is an existential challenge for which the United States is ill-prepared, unless its leaders make decisions now to adjust the US strategic posture."

The Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States said it has a robust array of threat assessments from the Intelligence Community and Defense Intelligence

Enterprise and concludes that the United States will be poorly prepared to deal with these challenges specifically from 2027 to 2035 and beyond.

The commission urges the United States to address this issue urgently and resolutely.

According to the report, this includes fielding strong deterrent capabilities and bolstering the US industrial base and American innovation.

The report also emphasized that the US president and the Congress must ensure appropriate, consistent, and timely funding to support the United States' strategic posture.

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.

Nobody Should Question US Ability to Expeditiously Flow Force to Middle East - Pentagon

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The United States remains capable and willing to expeditiously flow military force into the Middle East and nobody should question that amid the escalation of the conflict between Israel and Hamas, a senior US defense official said on Thursday.

"What has been very clear, especially in the past year from our US military, is that we remain able and capable and willing to dynamically and expeditiously flow force into the region," the official said during a press briefing. "I have no further posture adjustments to announce today, but nobody should question the ability of the US military to do that expeditiously at the direction of President [Joe] Biden."

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 Warships Near Israel Will Provide Long-Range Strike Options - Defense Official

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The USS Gerald R. Ford and connected carrier strike group will provide Israel with intelligence support and long-range strike options, a senior US defense official said on Thursday.

"In terms of the activities of the Ford... they will be conducting a range of activities, including intelligence support, maritime support, long-range strike options, et cetera, and we expect all of that to remain active and available in support of Israel's defense," the senior defense official 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.

Senior US Defense Official Says Small Diameter Bombs Part of Israel Aid Considerations

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The United States is considering including small diameter bombs as part of military aid to Israel for use in its conflict with Palestinian Hamas fighters, a senior US defense official said on Thursday.

"Small diameter bombs are certainly part of a category of precision-guided munitions that we are consulting with the Israelis on," the senior defense official 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.

Trudeau Says Canada Stands in Solidarity With Israeli People, Condemns Hamas Attacks

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - Canada strongly condemns the Palestinian organization Hamas' attacks on Israel and stands in solidarity with the Israeli people and supports their right to self-defence in accordance with international law, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Thursday.

"The violence and the details that we're learning are absolutely abominable, and Canada is unreservedly condemning Hamas attacks against Israel, and we are in solidarity with the Israeli people. Canada supports Israel's right to defend itself in accordance with international law," Trudeau said during a press conference.

Trudeau characterized Hamas as a terrorist organization that represents neither the Palestinian people nor their legitimate aspirations, just as they are not representative of Arabs and individual Islamic believers.

The prime minister said both, Israelis and Palestinians should be allowed to live in a peaceful and secure environment, where their dignity and human rights will be respected.

In addition, Trudeau announced that Ottawa would provide C\$10 million (US\$7.3 million) in humanitarian assistance to address the "urgent needs" of both peoples.

Trudeau also said that the Canadian authorities are taking appropriate measures to ensure the safety of "vulnerable members" and places of worship given the growing tensions between Jews and Muslims around the world stemming from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"Our government is in regular contact with the leadership of the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], and your local MPs are closely liaising with law enforcement," Trudeau 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.

Pentagon Confirms Austin Plans to Visit Israel on Friday - Senior Defense Official

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin will visit Israel on Friday to discuss security assistance needs amid the Israel-Gaza war, a senior defense official said on Thursday.

"I would like to confirm for you that Secretary Austin plans to travel to Israel tomorrow," the official said in a conference call. "He's expecting to meet with Prime Minister [Benjamin]

Netanyahu, Minister of Defense [Yoav] Gallant and the Israeli war cabinet."

Austin will discuss Israel's security assistance needs, the official said, adding that the first shipment of US military aid including munitions arrived in Israel earlier this week. The United States fully expects to see continuous delivery of US security assistance to Israel in response to their requests, the official 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.

Trudeau Says First Evacuation Flight Out of Israel Landed in Athens

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Thursday that the first evacuation flight out of Israel has landed in Athens, Greece, while a second plane has already landed in Tel Aviv.

Earlier on Thursday, Canadian National Defense Minister Bill Blair, Foreign Affairs Minister Melanie Joly and the Embassy in Israel confirmed that the first Canadian Armed Forces flight with 130 passengers on board had departed from Tel Aviv to Athens.

"I can confirm that a first Canadian Armed Forces flight has departed Tel-Aviv with approximately 130 passengers and has landed safely in Athens. As we speak, a second plane has already landed in Tel Aviv and will bring people to Athens in a few hours," Trudeau said.

The Prime Minister added that Canada was looking for alternative routes for those who could not reach Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion international airport.

As three Canadians have now been confirmed dead and three others are still unaccounted for in Israel in the recent Hamas attacks, Trudeau offered condolences to the victims' families and emphasized that the government is in contact with the relatives of the missing citizens.

Canada is in contact with the local authorities on the matter as well as to ensure the safety of Canadian nationals in Israel, Trudeau said.

In addition, Canada has dispatched members of its Standing Rapid Deployment Team to the region in a bid to assist and provide logistical support, Trudeau said.

"This is a unit of specialized officials who are specifically trained to help during times of emergencies or crises," Trudeau added.

The Canadian government has said that 4,200 Canadians are currently registered in Israel and 475 in the Palestinian West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

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 Ready to Discuss Proposals for UN Peace Missions in Africa - Envoy

UNITED NATIONS, October 12 (Sputnik) - Russia stands ready to discuss proposals on peace missions in Africa in cooperation with the United Nations, Russian Deputy Permanent Representative Anna Evstigneeva said on Thursday.

“We stand ready to continue to discuss existing proposals on a possible future process for planning and adoption of joint decisions on African peace support missions in Africa, including more viable models for financing as part of the forthcoming negotiations process on the future of a specialized United Nations Security Council Resolution,” Evstigneeva told the Security Council members in a session on cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

The success of regional organizations lies in solidarity, she added.

The United Nations Office to the African Union was established by a UN General Assembly resolution in 2010. The resolution mandates the United Nations and the African Union to cooperate in the area of peace and security, UN sharing advice to the African Union both long-term and short-term.

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 Oil Production Has Hit Record High of 13.2Mln Barrels Per Day - Energy Agency EIA

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - US oil production has hit record highs of 13.2 million barrels per day, eclipsing a peak not breached since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic three years ago, government data showed on Thursday.

Crude oil output in the United States grew by 300,000 barrels per day during the week to October 6 from the prior week's level of 12.9 million barrels daily to reach the new high, according to the Weekly Petroleum Status Report of the Energy Information Administration, or EIA.

The EIA has been estimating higher crude production for the United States in recent months, citing improved efficiency in output at US shale oil basins despite a sheer cutback in the number of oil rigs actively deployed by drillers.

“It's staggering how far US oil production has come in just a few months this year to reach this record high cited by the EIA,” said John Kilduff, partner at New York energy hedge fund Again Capital.

Along with record production, exports of US crude also hit all-time highs during the first half of this year as oil from the United States filled pockets of demand underserved by OPEC+ production cuts, the EIA said in a separate report on Wednesday.

Crude shipments from the United States period averaged 3.99 million barrels per day in the January-June period, setting a record high for any first-half since 2015, when the US ban on crude exports was repealed, the EIA said.

It noted that exports rose almost 20% in the first half of this year compared with the first six months of 2022, rising by 650,000 barrels daily.

OPEC+, the global alliance of oil producers led by Saudi Arabia and Russia, has been aggressively cutting crude supplies on the global market in recent months, citing uncertainties about demand. The Saudis have pledged to cut 1 million b/d until the end of the year while Russia has said it will reduce daily supply by 300,000 barrels. The rest of the 23-nation strong OPEC+ is contributing about 1.5 to 2.0 million barrels per day in cuts.

The EIA said Europe was the largest regional destination for US crude oil exports by volume, at

1.75 million b/d, led by exports to the Netherlands and UK.

Asia was the regional destination with the next-highest volume, at 1.68 million barrels daily, led by exports to China and South Korea.

The United States also exported significantly smaller volumes of crude oil to Canada, Africa, and Central America and South America.

Although exports increased in the first half of 2023, the United States still imports more crude oil than it exports, meaning it remains a net crude oil importer.

The United States continues to import crude oil despite rising domestic crude oil production in part because many US refineries are configured to process heavy, sour crude oil rather than the light, sweet crude oil typically produced in the United States.

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

UPDATE - Israel Considering 'Leningrad Approach' of Starvation in Gaza - Seymour Hersh

(Updates with rewrites to text)

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) – Israel is considering the “Leningrad Approach” of starving residents of the Gaza Strip to death in order to avoid a ground invasion, as part of its retaliatory response to Hamas’ unprecedented attacks, US journalist Seymour Hersh reported, citing a “veteran of Israel’s national security apparatus.”

“The big debate today...is whether to starve Hamas out or kill as many as 100,000 people in Gaza,” the source told Hersh, as quoted on his Substack blog post. “Hamas now only has a two or three-day supply of purified water and that, along with a lack of food...may be enough to flush all the Hamas [forces] out.”

Hamas’ forces are believed to primarily live underground, so starvation would avoid the messiness of a building-by-building attack. The source said Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the military leadership were also not confident that the Israeli Army’s ground forces could handle a Gaza offensive, as there were “not trained for combat” and “used primarily as security guards in the West Bank.”

The situation in Gaza is already dire – in addition to a round-the-clock barrage of missile strikes on civilian sites like mosques, hospitals, and residential buildings, Israel announced a siege on Gaza on Monday, depriving the blockaded population of basics like food, water, medicine, fuel, and electricity.

The source said the Leningrad approach might force Hamas’ hand to release some Israeli women and children it had taken hostage in exchange for supplies.

At the same time, he noted that the situation was highly fluid and unpredictable, and Israel may decide to move forward with general ground invasion. He said that the 360,000 reservists called up were undergoing crash training and Israel could decide on its military strategy by the end of the week.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file

with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

World Not Facing Debt Crisis, Should Still Be Concerned - Georgieva

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The global economy is not facing a debt crisis at the moment, but the international community should still remain vigilant about the issue, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said on Thursday. "We should be concerned but recognize that we are not in the footsteps of a debt crisis," Georgieva said during a conversation on the sidelines of the IMF and the World Bank annual meetings in Morocco.

Georgieva warned that low-income states are going through the most significant difficulties. She described the situation as "dire" and noted that about half of those countries are near or in debt distress.

It, however, does not apply to the rest of the world. At the same time, every fifth middle-income country faces debt distress, the IMF chief warned.

The most vulnerable countries are hit the hardest since they enter the situation without sufficient resources to protect themselves, and high interest rates are "eating" their revenues, Georgieva said.

"The cost of servicing debt has doubled," she stated, adding that international support has stagnated.

Georgieva called on the global community to support countries in need.

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 Exploring Other Options to Evacuate Americans From Israel by Land, Sea - White House

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The United States is exploring options to expand its capacity to evacuate Americans from Israel by land and sea amid escalating tensions in the region, White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said on Thursday. "We're also exploring other options to expand the capacity of doing this including exploring whether it's possible to help Americans leave by land and by sea," Kirby said during a press briefing.

According to Kirby, the United States beginning on Friday will begin organizing charter flights to evacuate Americans from Israel to sites in Europe amid the Israel-Gaza war.

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 on Friday to Begin Organizing Flights From Israel to Europe for Americans - White House

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The United States beginning on Friday will begin organizing charter flights to evacuate Americans from Israel to sites in Europe amid the Israel-Gaza war, White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said on Thursday.

"Beginning tomorrow, the United States government will arrange charter flights to provide transportation from Israel to sites in Europe," Kirby said during a press briefing. "They're still working through some of the details of that to assist US citizens and their immediate family members."

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.

Nearly Half of Canadians Say Recognizing Hunka Severely Damaged Canada's Reputation - Poll

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - Nearly half of all Canadians believe that the invitation and recognition of Ukrainian Nazi veteran Yaroslav Hunka at the House of Commons severely damaged Canada's reputation around the world, a new Nanos poll revealed on Thursday.

On September 22, the 98-year-old Ukrainian Nazi veteran who fought in the ranks of the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the Nazi SS during World War II, was given a standing ovation by the entire Canadian legislature as the then House of Commons Speaker Anthony Rota provided introductory remarks prior to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's address to the Canadian parliament.

The honoring of the Nazi veteran prompted Rota's resignation and outcries from Russia and Poland, with senior officials suggesting Hunka should be extradited to face justice in the court of law. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov insisted that Hunka's crimes had no statute of limitations.

According to the survey, 48% of Canadians said honoring Hunka during Zelenskyy's visit caused a "major impact" on Canada's reputation abroad, whereas 39% said they considered the impact to be "minor."

The poll further found that nearly one in ten, or 9%, believe inviting and recognizing Hunka had no impact on Canada's worldwide reputation. Three percent of respondents expressed uncertainty on the matter.

Nanos' poll was conducted between October 1-4 on a randomized sample of 1058 Canadians aged 18 and over and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3%.

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.

Number of Americans Killed in Hamas Attack on Israel Rises to 27 - White House

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The number of US citizens killed in the Hamas attack on Israel over the weekend has increased to 27, White House National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said on Thursday.

"We can now update the number of Americans that we know have been killed to 27 and the number of unaccounted for stands today at 14," Kirby 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.

Biden Team Discusses Steps to Protect US Homeland Amid Israel-Gaza War - White House

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - US President Joe Biden and his national security team on Thursday discussed steps to safeguard the US mainland amid the Israel-Gaza war, the White House said in a press release.

"This morning, the President and the Vice President met with senior Administration officials...to discuss steps we are taking to safeguard the homeland and the people of the United States, including Jewish, Arab, and Muslim communities, following the Hamas terrorist attacks in Israel," the release said.

The meeting included US Attorney General Merrick Garland, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas, Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation Chris Wray, Homeland Security Advisor Liz Sherwood-Randall, National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, Principal Deputy National Security Advisor Jon Finer, and White House Chief of Staff Jeff Zients, the release noted.

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

Canada to Provide C\$10Mln in Humanitarian Aid to Address Needs in Israel, Gaza - Trudeau

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Thursday that Ottawa would provide an initial C\$10 million (US\$7.3 million) in humanitarian assistance to address the urgent needs in both Israel and the Gaza Strip.

"Canada will be providing an initial C\$10 million in humanitarian assistance to address urgent needs in Israel and in the Gaza Strip, and Minister Hussien [Ahmed] will have more details soon," Trudeau said.

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

Blinken Says Deputy US Hostage Envoy Will Remain in Israel to Help Free Americans

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Thursday that Deputy Special Representative for Hostage Affairs Steve Gillen joined him on a trip to Israel to help secure the release of US nationals being held hostage by Palestinian Hamas fighters.

“We are doing everything we can to secure the release of the hostages, working closely with our Israeli partners. I brought with me to Israel our Deputy Special Representative for Hostage Affairs, Steve Gillen, who joined my meetings with the families and will stay on the ground here to support the efforts to free their loved ones,” Blinken said during remarks in Israel.

The Biden administration has confirmed that some US citizens are being held hostage by Hamas in Gaza, following the launch of a surprise attack on Israel by the organization.

The United States is not considering using its own military forces to resolve the situation, Deputy US National Security Advisor Jon Finer said earlier on Thursday. However, the US sent experts to Israel to advise them on the situation, Finer 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.

Blinken Says US Retains Right to Block Newly Unfrozen \$6Bln in Iran Funds

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Thursday that the United States has strict oversight of the newly unfrozen \$6 billion in Iranian funds and retains the right to freeze them again should Tehran misuse them.

“None of the [Iranian] funds that have now gone to Qatar have actually been spent or accessed in any way by Iran. Indeed, funds from that account are overseen by the Treasury Department and can only be dispensed for humanitarian goods, food, medicine, medical equipment, and never touch Iranian hands. We have strict oversight of the funds and we retain the right to freeze them,” Blinken said during a press conference during his visit to Israel.

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 Says Discussed With Israeli Officials Ways to Protect Civilians in Gaza

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) – US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Thursday that he discussed possibilities for safe passage for civilians out of Gaza with Israeli leadership amid the ongoing escalation following a Hamas attack on Israel last week.

“We also talked about possibilities for safe passage for civilians who want to leave or get out of the way in Gaza and that's a conversation, a discussion that we will pursue in the coming days, including some of the countries that we will be visiting. So this is important and this is an area for focus,” Blinken said during a press conference during his visit to Israel.

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.

Senior US Official Gillen Visits Israel to Deal With Hostage Situation - Blinken

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) -US Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced on Thursday that US Deputy Special Representative for hostage affairs Steve Gillen is already in Israel and will remain there to deal with the hostage situation.

"I brought with me to Israel, our Deputy Special Representative for hostage affairs, Steve Gillen, who joined my meetings with the families, and will stay on the ground here to support the efforts to free their loved ones," Blinken said.

The United States is not considering using US military forces to rescue hostages in Israel, Deputy US National Security Advisor Jon Finer said on Thursday.

However, the US sent government experts to the region to advise Israeli counterparts on the situation, Finer added.

On Saturday, militants from Palestinian Hamas organization launched a surprise attack on Israel, prompting the Israeli government to declare a state of war in the country. The White House has confirmed that some US nationals are among the hostages held by Hamas.

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.

CAF's First Evacuation Flight Departs from Tel-Aviv with 130 Passengers – Blair

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) – The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) have carried the first evacuation flight out of Israel's Tel-Aviv with 130 passengers on board, Canada's Minister of National Defense Bill Blair said on Thursday.

On Wednesday, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs Melanie Joly said Ottawa would be assisted by the CAF and several of their aircrafts to evacuate Canadian nationals as well as permanent residents, their spouses, and children. Options were being discussed for those who could not reach the Israeli capital.

"We're working tirelessly to assist Canadians in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. I can confirm that the first @CanadianForces evacuation flight has departed from Tel Aviv with approximately 130 passengers on board. We will continue to be there for Canadians who need help," Blair said via X platform.

The Canadian Embassy in Israel added in a statement shared via X that the assisted departure of its nationals out of Israel had begun and was being coordinated by CAF and the Embassies in Athens and Tel-Aviv, further adding that more flights were on their way.

On Saturday, Hamas launched surprise large-scale attacks against Israel from the Gaza Strip, prompting Israel to declare a state of war the following day and launch retaliatory strikes. On Monday, Israel ordered a full blockade of the Gaza Strip, home to more than 2 million Palestinians, cutting off supplies of water, food and fuel. Israeli and Palestinian officials have

reported hundreds of dead people and thousands of injured as a result of the escalation in fighting.

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 Says Will Visit Jordan, Meet With Saudi, Egyptian, UAE Officials in Coming Days

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - US Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced on Thursday that he will head to Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Qatar in the upcoming days for talks with senior officials over the escalation of fighting in Israel.

"Over the coming days, we'll visit with leaders in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Qatar," Blinken said during his stay in Israel.

Blinken also said that he will visit Jordan immediately following his trip to Israel.

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 Confirms He Will Meet With Palestinian Authority President Abbas In Jordan

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) -US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has confirmed on Thursday that he will hold a meeting with Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the State of Palestine and the Palestinian National Authority.

"From here i will go to Jordan where i will meet with His Majesty King Abdullah and with Palestinian Authority President Abbas," Blinken said.

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

US Prosecutors File Superseding Indictment Against US Senator Menendez - Court Filing

WASHINGTON, October 13 (Sputnik) - US prosecutors filed a superseding indictment in the fraud case against US Senator Robert Menendez that added an additional count of "conspiracy for a public official to act as a foreign agent" against him and two co-defendants, according to a court filing on Thursday.

"From at least in or about January 2018 through at least in or about June 2022, in the Southern District of New York and elsewhere, Robert Menendez, Nadine Menendez, a.k.a 'Nadine Arslanian,' and Wael Hana, a.k.a. 'Will Hana,' the defendants, and others known and unknown, willfully and knowingly combined, conspired, confederated and agreed together and with each other to have a public official, to wit, Robert Menendez, act as an agent of a foreign principal, to wit, the government of Egypt and Egyptian officials, required to register under FARA, Title 22,

United States Code, Sections 611-621, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 219," the filing said.

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

US Extends For Another Year Order to Deter Turkish Operations in Syria - Biden

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The United States extended for another year a national emergency order designed to deter Turkish operations in Syria as a means to maintain the status quo in the region, President Joe Biden said on Thursday.

"I am continuing for 1 year the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13894 with respect to the situation in and in relation to Syria," Biden said in a press release.

This executive order was introduced by the Trump administration in October 2019 in response to a Turkish offensive in northeastern Syria.

The order declares that the Turkish military operation undermines the US mission to defeat the Islamic State terrorist group (banned in Russia) and poses an extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.

Provisions in the order block the assets of Turkish officials and ministries.

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

Over 70% of Canadians Believe Trudeau Allegations About India Ties to Nijjar Murder - Poll

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - More than 70% of Canadians believe the statements made by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau about intelligence pointing to the alleged involvement of the Indian government in the killing of Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada, a new Nanos poll revealed on Thursday.

Nanos conducted the poll between October 1-4 on a randomized sample of 1058 Canadians aged 18 and over with a margin of error of plus or minus 3%.

Forty-seven percent of respondents said they believe and 27% said they somewhat believe the statements made by Trudeau on the intelligence saying that India might have been involved in the murder of Canadian national and Sikh separatist Nijjar in June.

However, trust in Trudeau's statements on the matter is not shared by nearly one in five Canadians, the poll said, as 10% said they do not believe him and 8% said they somewhat believed the intelligence alleging India's involvement.

Trudeau said in September that Canada was examining "credible allegations" potentially linking Indian officials to the June 18 killing of Nijjar by two masked gunmen in Surrey, British Columbia. The separatist leader campaigned for the creation of an independent Sikh state in India called Khalistan.

Following the incident, Canada expelled a high-ranking Indian diplomat allegedly linked with

Indian foreign intelligence.

In response to Ottawa's actions, Indian authorities announced their decision to expel a senior Canadian diplomat and asked him to leave the country within five days. The Indian Foreign Ministry later urged its citizens planning to visit or currently in Canada to exercise extra caution in view of "growing anti-India activities."

In early October, India reportedly suggested that Canada recall 41 out of 62 of his diplomats currently working from the country in a bid to even out the respective numbers, giving the 10th of this month as a deadline. Noncompliance would mean "excess" Canadian diplomatic staff would lose diplomatic immunity from arrest and prosecution.

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.

Systematic Alpha Management CEO Pleads Guilty to Fraud Scheme – US Justice Department

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) – Peter Kambolin, the CEO of investment firm Systematic Alpha Management, pleaded guilty on Wednesday to conspiracy to commit commodities fraud for operating a "cherry-picking" scheme, according to a Department of Justice release on Thursday.

"A former chief executive officer of an investment firm pleaded guilty yesterday to a "cherry-picking" scheme, in which he fraudulently misappropriated profitable trades to himself, and saddled his investors with losses," the release stated.

Peter Kambolin, 48, a US-Russian national of Sunny Isles Beach, Florida, was the owner and CEO of Systematic Alpha Management LLC (SAM), an investment firm that Kambolin marketed as offering algorithmic trading strategies involving futures contracts.

Between January 2019 and November 2021, Kambolin engaged in a cherry-picking scheme in which he fraudulently allocated profits and losses from futures trades to benefit his own accounts unfairly at the expense of his clients.

Kambolin also misrepresented to his clients that SAM employed trading strategies focused on cryptocurrency futures contracts and foreign exchange futures contracts, when in reality, approximately half of his trading in each pool involved equity index futures contracts. In doing so, Kambolin defrauded investors located in the United States and abroad by, among other things, depriving them of profitable trades.

He used the proceeds of the scheme to fund personal expenses, including rent for a beachfront apartment, and transferred proceeds to foreign bank accounts that his co-conspirator controlled in Belarus and Dominica.

Kambolin faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison. A sentencing date has not yet been set.

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 Treasury Tells Lawmakers \$6Bln in Unfrozen Iranian Funds Remains Unused - Reports

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The \$6 billion in Iranian funds unfrozen by the Biden administration will remain unused, following alleged support by Iran for the attacks by the Palestinian group Hamas on Israel, Deputy US Treasury Secretary Wally Adeyemo said on Thursday.

The unfrozen money is not going anywhere anytime soon, Punchbowl News quoted Adeyemo as having said during a meeting with Democrats at the US House of Representatives.

The statement comes following criticism by some lawmakers of the Biden administration's decision to unfreeze the Iranian funds as part of a prisoner swap deal earlier this year. Some US lawmakers allege that Iran backed Hamas' attacks on Israel, although the Biden administration has said that it has not seen direct evidence of Iranian involvement.

The United States reached an understanding with Qatar, where the Iranian funds are being held, not to release any of the money, US media reported on Thursday. The Biden administration has said that the funds are only available for humanitarian purposes.

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.

One Third of Canadians Say Ottawa Giving Too Much Financial Support to Ukraine – Poll

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) – Over 30% of Canadians believe the country is giving too much financial assistance to Ukraine as it fights Russia's special military operation, a Nanos poll revealed on Thursday.

About one third (31%) of Canadians think the government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is giving away too much financial assistance to Ukraine, the poll said, adding that 44% believe Ottawa is providing just the right amount of funds Kiev requires.

Among the surveyed, nineteen percent said Ottawa was not giving enough assistance, whereas a meager 6% expressed being unsure.

Canada's latest assistance package for Ukraine was announced on Wednesday by the Department of National Defense. It included C\$25 million worth of winter gear and a range of small arms, artillery, air, and naval ammunitions.

Since January 2022, the Canadian government has provided over C\$9 billion (\$6.6 billion) in financial, humanitarian, development, immigration, and other assistance to Kiev, including C\$2.4 billion in military support.

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

Pentagon Says No Travel to Announce Amid Reports Austin May Visit Israel

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The Pentagon told Sputnik Thursday it has no travel to announce amid reports that Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin will visit Israel to assess the ongoing war with Hamas.

"We don't have any travel to announce," a spokesperson said.

Haaretz reported that Austin is expected to visit Israel as soon as October 13.

Earlier in the day, a number of media outlets reported that US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who arrived in Israel earlier in the day, will also visit Qatar on Friday following his trip to Jordan.

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 Calls Trump's Hezbollah, Israel Remarks 'Unhinged'

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The White House on Thursday criticized former US President Donald Trump's remarks on the Hamas-Israel war as "dangerous and unhinged."

"We don't comment on 2024. Statements like this are dangerous and unhinged. It's completely lost on us why any American would ever praise an Iran-backed terrorist organization as 'smart.' Or have any objection to the United States warning terrorists not to attack Israel," spokesman Andrew Bates said in a social media post.

Bates stressed the urgency of standing united with Israel as it is "fighting back against one of the worst acts of mass murder in the country's history."

"That's what the President is doing as commander in chief," Bates stated.

At a campaign rally in West Palm Beach, Trump called Hezbollah "very smart" and the Israeli defense minister a "jerk." He said Israel was "not ready" for the "terrible thing that happened," referring to Saturday's surprise incursion by Hamas. He also accused Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of letting the US down, hinting at Israel's alleged insufficient involvement in the assassination of Iranian commander Qassem Soleimani.

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

Eight in 10 Canadians Pessimistic About Housing Becoming More Affordable in 5 Years - Poll

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - More than 80% percent of Canadians are pessimistic about the prospect of seeing any improvement in the next five years regarding housing affordability, a new Nanos poll revealed on Thursday.

"More than eight in ten Canadians say they are not confident (57%) or somewhat not confident (24%) that in five years housing in Canada will be more affordable than it is today, while under one in five are somewhat confident (14%) or confident (2%)," the poll said.

In addition, more than half of Canadians said they trust more the Conservative and the New Democratic Party (NDP) when it comes to housing affordability, respectively 25% and 26%, than

the governing Liberals of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who are only trusted by sixteen percent.

The poll noted that the October findings remain consistent across regions, age and gender. Nanos also found that Conservatives currently maintain a small edge over their Liberal counterparts when it comes to being trusted on economic matters like the management of inflation and financial growth in Canada.

Nanos conducted the poll between October 1-4 on a sample of 1058 Canadians over the age of 18. The poll's margin of error is plus or minus 3%.

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, Australia, EU Unveil Measures to Disrupt Russian Oil Trade Above Price Cap - Advisory

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The so-called price cap coalition of countries have introduced an additional set of measures to prevent and disrupt maritime trade with Russian crude oil above the price cap of \$60 per barrel, according to a joint advisory published by the US Treasury Department on Thursday.

"The price cap coalition is issuing this advisory to provide recommendations concerning specific best practices in the maritime oil industry. This advisory reflects our efforts to promote responsible practices in the industry to prevent and disrupt sanctioned trade, and enhance compliance with the price caps on crude oil and petroleum products of Russian Federation origin, put in place by the G7, the European Union, and Australia," the Treasury Department said.

The document outlines potential risks and seven recommended best practices with respect to the Russian-origin seaborne crude oil.

More specifically, the price cap coalition recommends maritime industry stakeholders to require vessels to be insured by legitimate insurance providers and have appropriate maritime insurance coverage for the entirety of their voyages, the advisory said.

In addition, the coalition encourages industry stakeholders to promote the continuous broadcasting of vessels' Automatic Identification Systems and require ships to document circumstances that caused their disablement, the advisory said.

Industry stakeholders should also conduct enhanced due diligence with respect to cases of ship-to-ship transfers that can be used to conceal the origin or destination of cargo in violation of sanctions, the advisory said.

The coalition recommends industry stakeholders to be cautious of any additional shipping and other costs that may be used to disguise the true price of the cargo i.e., above the Russian oil price cap, the advisory added.

In December 2022, the G7 countries, Australia and the EU imposed a price cap of \$60 per barrel on Russian crude oil transported by sea, blocking the transport of oil bought at higher prices. Russia responded by prohibiting selling its oil to countries supporting the price cap mechanism.

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen told reporters in September that the price cap on Russian

oil has not been working as well as the West intended with Moscow's ability to create shadow services for its oil shipments and after the rally in crude prices that brought the price of a barrel of oil near \$100.

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 Sanctions 2 Entities, 2 Vessels for Allegedly Violating Russian Oil Price Cap

(Adds details in paras 4-7)

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The United States is imposing sanctions on two entities and two vessels for allegedly transporting Russian oil sold above the West-led price cap, the Treasury said on Thursday.

"Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) is imposing sanctions on two entities and identifying as blocked property two vessels that used Price Cap Coalition service providers while carrying Russian crude oil above the Coalition-agreed price cap," the statement said.

The sanctions target Turkey-based Ice Pearl Navigation Corp, UAE-based Lumber Marine SA, as well as vessels SCF Primorye and YasaGolden Bosphorus.

According to the Treasury, the SCF Primorye carried Novy Port crude oil priced above \$75 per barrel from a Russian port after the \$60 per barrel price cap took effect in December 2022.

Lumber Marine SA is the registered owner of the vessel.

The YasaGolden Bosphorus carried Eastern Siberia Pacific Oil crude oil priced above \$80 per barrel, the Treasury alleged. The vessels are owned by Ice Pearl Navigation Corp.

Both vessels used US-based service providers while transporting the Russian origin oil, according to the Treasury.

In a separate statement, the State Department said that the action demonstrates US vigilance in monitoring compliance with the price cap, a policy that it believes promotes global market stability while limiting Russian government oil revenue as the country conducts a military operation in 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 Congressman Scalise 20 Votes Short of Securing House Speakership - Congressional Source

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - US House Majority Leader Steve Scalise is approximately 20 votes short of securing the 217 votes needed to advance his House speaker bid on the floor, a congressional source told Sputnik on Thursday.

"It would appear that Mr. Scalise remains about 20 votes shy of the needed 217," the congressional source said.

House Republicans are scheduled to meet later on Wednesday to discuss the speaker election, the source added.

Last week, the House of Representatives ousted Congressman Kevin McCarthy as speaker in a historic first, leaving the leadership role vacant amid efforts to fund the federal government and support Israel and Ukraine.

On Wednesday, House Republicans nominated Scalise over Congressman Jim Jordan in a vote of 113-99 during a closed-door meeting. However, a number of House Republicans have said that they will still back Jordan during a floor vote, imperiling Scalise's chances of securing the speakership.

The House of Representatives must elect a new speaker before moving forward with regular legislative business, such as passing bills.

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.

Nearly Half Canadians Support Using Notwithstanding Clause Over Gender Policy – Poll

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) – Nearly one in two Canadians support the use of the Notwithstanding Clause to ensure academic institutions inform parents when their child wishes to identify by another gender or pronoun, a Leger poll revealed on Thursday.

Commonly known as the “Notwithstanding Clause”, Section 33 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms allows for provincial Parliaments to temporarily suspend Sections 2 and 7-15 of the Charter.

Section 2 comprises fundamental rights such as freedom of expression, religion, and association, whereas Section 7-14 includes legal rights, those of liberty and freedom from search and seizures and cruel and unusual punishment.

Section 15 ensures equality rights and notably prohibits some forms of discrimination by the governments of Canada associated with race, sex, or disabilities.

Around 46% of Canadians said they would support the use of the notwithstanding clause to ensure that parents are informed by their children's schools when the child wishes to be addressed by another gender or pronoun than that assigned by birth, the poll said.

The proportion is significantly higher with Canadian parents among whom nearly two in three, 59%, expressed their support for provincial legislatures to invoke the clause to ensure schools due diligence on the matter.

However, invoking the clause to ban all discussion about sexual orientation and gender identity was only supported by 37% of the surveyed, a share that is ten percent higher among parents.

Moreover, 63% of Canadians are of the opinion that academic institutions should inform parents if their child tells school personnel of their wish to change gender or pronoun, the poll found, adding that 45% of the surveyed said school should do so even if the children “does not feel safe” informing their progenitors of the matter.

Among other findings, the poll revealed that 51% of Canadians, and 58% of parents, believe schools should inform prior to the beginning of the academic year, of their intention to use sensitive material such as those related to sexual orientation or gender identity.

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.

Uncertain Weather Forces New Delay in Mission Launch to Asteroid Psyche - NASA

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - Mission officials have postponed the scheduled launch of the Psyche spacecraft from Thursday morning until Friday morning, citing favorable weather conditions around the Kennedy Space Center launch complex in Florida, NASA announced in a statement on Thursday.

"NASA and SpaceX stood down from the Oct. 12 launch of Psyche due to unfavorable weather conditions," the statement said. "NASA and SpaceX are now targeting launch at 10:19 am EDT [Eastern Daylight Time] Friday, October 13, from Launch Complex 39A," the statement said.

On Wednesday, US Space Force Launch Weather Officer Arlena Moses told reporters there was only a 19% chance of launch on Thursday owing to the threat of heavy rainstorms and lightning. On Friday morning, launch conditions would improve to 50%, Moses added.

On Wednesday, NASA Senior Launch Director Tim Dunne said the space agency had set an upper limit of 31 miles per hour as the highest wind speed in which they would approve any launch.

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.

Israel Considering 'Leningrad Approach' to Starve Out Hamas in Gaza - US Journalist

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - Israel is debating whether to utilize a "Leningrad approach" to starve out Hamas fighters in the Gaza Strip and thus avoid a ground invasion, but that course of action may kill some 100,000 residents as well, US investigative journalist Seymour Hersh reported, citing an Israeli national security veteran.

"The big debate today ... is whether to starve Hamas out or kill as many as 100,000 people in Gaza," the source told Hersh. "Hamas now only has a two or three-day supply of purified water and that, along with a lack of food ... may be enough to flush all the Hamas [forces] out."

On Monday, Israel announced a full blockade of Gaza, cutting off food, water, medicines, fuel and electricity. The situation in Gaza has already been dire due to round-the-clock airstrikes on civilian sites, including on mosques, hospitals, educational institutions and residential buildings.

Hersh cited the source as saying that Hamas' forces are believed to primarily live underground so the Leningrad approach would avoid the potentially difficult and costly ground offensive that would involve building-by-building fighting.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the country's military leadership have not been confident that their forces could handle a ground offensive in Gaza given that many have not trained for combat and used primarily as security guards in the West Bank, the source said.

The Leningrad approach may also force Hamas' hand to release some Israeli women and

children that it had taken hostage in exchange for supplies, the source said.

The situation is highly fluid and unpredictable, and Israel may decide to move forward with a general ground invasion, the source said.

Some 360,000 reservists have been undergoing crash training since being called up and Israel could decide on its military strategy by the end of the week, the source 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.

UPDATE - US Inflation Beats Expectations Again in September as Consumer Prices Up 3rd Month in Row

(Adds details, comments and context, paragraphs 3-19)

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - US inflation was higher than expected for a third month in a row as September consumer prices grew by an annual rate of 3.7%, the same as in August, and higher than the 3.6% forecast by Wall Street economists.

The latest reading of the Consumer Price Index, or CPI, suggests the Federal Reserve has stalled since July in its target to return inflation to 2% per annum, after making steady progress towards the target earlier this year.

The CPI also reflected higher month-on-month inflation of 0.4% in September versus economists' forecast for 0.3% — although that was lower than the actual boom of 0.6% seen in August.

Only core CPI — a reading stripped of volatile energy and food prices — came in as expected. Annual core CPI expanded by 4.1% in September, exactly as forecast, and lower than August's 4.1%. Monthly core CPI grew 0.3%, also right on projection, and unchanged from August levels.

The Fed has repeatedly pointed to overheated labor market and wage growth, aside from soaring energy prices, as reasons for inflation remaining well above 3% per annum versus its target for 2%. US average hourly earnings have virtually grown without stop since they began creeping up in July 2020 after the labor market began springing back from the loss of some 20 million jobs from the initial outbreak of COVID-19.

In September, oil prices, as measured by global crude benchmark Brent, hit one-year highs of above \$97 per barrel.

Despite the threat of inflation creeping again, economists did not expect the Fed to immediately raise interest rates.

Some think politics may be influencing the central bank's decision. President Joe Biden is running for reelection in 2024 and economists have warned that persistent rate hikes could slow the economy enough to send it into recession. Grappling with lower popularity, Biden has been relying on 'Bidenomics' for his campaign — a theme that rides on the stellar US economic rebound from the pandemic.

"Overall inflation is down by 60% from its peak at a time when unemployment has remained below 4% for 20 months in a row and the share of working-age Americans in the workforce is the highest in 20 years. That's Bidenomics in action." the president said in a statement released by the White House after the CPI data on Thursday.

To fight inflation, the central bank hiked interest rates 11 times between March 2022 and August 2023, raising them by 5.25% from a base rate of just 0.25%. The Fed is scheduled to decide on rates again at its next two-day policy meeting ending on November 2.

“Today's CPI isn't going to move the needle on a Nov hike ... (not happening),” Guy Lebas of investment advisory service Janney Montgomery Scott said in comments reproduced on the FXLive platform.

The Fed's hesitancy for a hike in November was visible on Tuesday when two of its senior policy makers, Neel Kashkari and Raphael Bostic, indicated that increases carried out over the past year and a half — along with a little help from financial markets — could help the central bank's target for inflation.

Kashkari, who's president of the Minneapolis chapter of the Fed, said a selloff in US bonds could temper rising prices despite strong labor and wage growth.

Bostic, who's Atlanta Fed president, said current monetary policy was sufficiently restrictive in bringing inflation back to the Fed target of 2% per annum.

Before the breakout of the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020, the CPI expanded at less than 2% a year. The pandemic, trillions of dollars of relief spending by the government and a boom in employment and wages combined to send inflation soaring since mid-2021. Consumer prices reached 40-year highs of above 9% in June 2022.

The stellar growth in jobs and wages has particularly been a complicated issue for the Fed, which is tasked with ensuring both “maximum employment” and “manageable inflation” for Americans.

While policy-makers the world over typically celebrate on seeing good jobs numbers, the Fed is in a different predicament. The central bank wishes to see an easing of conditions that are a little “too good” now for the economy's own good — in this case, unemployment at more than 50-year lows and monthly wages that have grown at annual rates of 4% to 5% since July 2021.

Such job security and earnings have cushioned many Americans from the worst price pressures since the 1980s and encouraged them to continue spending, further feeding inflation.

The Fed's mandate for maximum employment means an unemployment rate below 4%. That has been achieved since January 2022, with last month's rate remaining at 3.8%. The central bank's goal for inflation remains elusive though.

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 Has Not Seen Massing Of Hezbollah Forces On Border With Israel - Austin

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) – The US does not see any massing of Hezbollah forces near the border with Israel, US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said on Thursday.

“We've not seen any massing of forces along the border,” Austin told reporters.

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 Says No Conditions Placed on US Military Aid to Israel

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The United States has not imposed any conditions on how Israel could use its military aid amid the ongoing war with Hamas since it trusts that the equipment will be used properly, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said on Thursday.

"In terms of conditions that we would place on the security assistance that we are providing to Israel, we've not placed conditions on the provision of this equipment," Austin told reporters.

The US trusts that Israel will use this aid properly, the Pentagon chief said.

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

US Not Considering Using Boots on Ground to Rescue Hostages in Gaza - White House

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) - The United States is not considering using US military forces to rescue hostages in Israel, Deputy US National Security Advisor Jon Finer said on Thursday.

"At this point, we are not contemplating US boots on the ground involved in that mission," Finer said in an interview with MSNBC, when asked about the potential for US forces to engage in hostage rescue operations.

However, the US sent government experts to the region to advise Israeli counterparts on the situation, Finer added.

On Saturday, militants from Palestinian Hamas organization launched a surprise attack on Israel, prompting the Israeli government to declare a state of war in the country. The White House has confirmed that some US nationals are among hostages held by Hamas.

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 Sanctions 2 Entities, 2 Vessels for Allegedly Violating Russian Oil Price Cap

WASHINGTON, October 12 (Sputnik) – The United States is imposing sanctions on two entities and two vessels for allegedly transporting Russian oil sold above the West-led price cap, the Treasury said on Thursday.

"Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) is imposing sanctions on two entities and identifying as blocked property two vessels that used Price Cap Coalition service providers while carrying Russian crude oil above the Coalition-agreed price cap," the statement said.

The sanctions target Turkey-based Ice Pearl Navigation Corp, UAE-based Lumber Marine SA,

as well as vessels SCF Primorye and YasaGolden Bosphorus.