

Some VOA journalists forced to leave US soon as visas expire

ASSOCIATED PRESS Washington, August 22



A file photo of the Voice of America building in Washington

MORE THAN A dozen journalists with the US government's premier international broadcaster may soon be forced to leave the United States as their visas expire with no action from the agency's new leadership.

Rep Eliot Engel, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, complained Friday that the US Agency for Global Media, which oversees VOA and its sister outlets, had ignored congressional requests for an explanation as to why the usually routine visa renewals had not been processed.

affected journalists had been given details of their status. There are roughly 80 foreign VOA employees in the United States, but the documents of the 16 are among the first to come up for renewal, according to congressional aides who were not authorised to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Engel, D-NY, also appealed to the departments of State and Homeland Security to extend grace periods for those journalists whose visas have already expired so they are not forced to leave without having

the time to make adequate arrangements. "It's unconscionable that a US government agency would create such fear and uncertainty for people whom we asked to do a job," Engel said in a statement. "Congress's attempts to seek answers from USAGM on this matter have been met with silence. It's clear that the agency is just trying to run out the clock until these journalists are forced to leave."

Pack, an associate of President Donald Trump's former political strategist Steve Bannon, has come under fire from both Democrats and Republicans for major changes he has made to the agency since he took over in June following a contentious confirmation process in the Senate. "Michael Pack's failure to seek visa extensions for these journalists means that they must leave the country, some of them going home to nations where governments regularly silence and harass journalists," Engel said.

Log 9 supplies 'Sorbene' oil sorbent pads to aid spill clean-up in Mauritius

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi, August 22

MUMBAI-HEADQUARTERED clean-tech startup Log 9 Spill Containment Pvt Ltd on Saturday said it supplied oil absorbent pads 'Sorbene' to clean up a major oil spill off the coast of island nation Mauritius.

The Mauritius government has declared a state of 'environmental emergency' in the country after the spill threatened flora and fauna of nearby wetlands and the centuries-old live corals, the company said. India has been assisting Mauritius in dealing with the crisis and has rushed a 10-member response team from the Indian Coast Guard along with 30 tonnes of specialised equipment.

South Korea, China reaffirm plans for leaders' summit

ASSOCIATED PRESS Seoul, August 22

SENIOR SOUTH KOREAN and Chinese officials on Saturday reaffirmed plans to arrange a summit between their leaders "at an early date" once coronavirus concerns subside, Seoul's presidential office said.

At a meeting in the South Korean port city of Busan, top Chinese diplomat Yang Jiechi and South Korea's national security adviser, Suh Hoon, also discussed the international stand-off over North Korea's nuclear weapons program and rising tensions between Washington and Beijing, the Blue House said in a statement.

The government of South Korean President Moon Jae-in has been eager to improve bilateral relations that have been strained since South Korea deployed a US anti-missile system

on its soil in 2017 over Chinese objections. Moon had hoped to host Chinese President Xi Jinping in Seoul during the earlier half of the year, but the spread of COVID-19 prevented the visit. Yang, a politburo member of the Chinese Communist Party's powerful Central Committee, promised constant communication and cooperation with South Korea while supporting efforts to denuclearise the Korean Peninsula and stabilise peace, according to the Blue House, which didn't provide further details.

Moon's government is eager to resume engagement with North Korea, which has virtually cut off all inter-Korean cooperation amid nuclear negotiations with the Trump administration that have stalled over disagreements in exchanging sanctions relief for nuclear disarmament.

Boeing testing hand-held UV wand to sanitise cockpits and cabins

BOEING CO SAID on Friday it is developing a hand-held wand that emits ultraviolet light to neutralise bacteria and viruses, part of a suite of methods to dis-

infect flight deck surfaces and controls, as well as surfaces throughout the cabin. Concerns by airline workers and passengers about the spread of Covid-

19 has fuelled a rush by companies to roll out new technology for aircraft sanitisation. The wand would eliminate the need for using alcohol or other

disinfectants that could damage sensitive electronic equipment, Rae Lutters, chief engineer for

Boeing's ecoDemonstrator programme, told a media briefing on Oct 1 date. REUTERS

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INFORMATION REGARDING TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, BOOK CLOSURE AND DIVIDEND 1. Notice is hereby given that the Twenty-Ninth Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the Members of ICRA Limited (the "Company") will be held on Wednesday, the 23rd day of September, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. (IST) through Video Conferencing ("VC")/Other Audio Visual Means ("OAVM").

