

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Governor Noem to have news conference today at 12:30



The following was posted on Kory Anderson's Facebook Page:

**Mom (Donna Anderson) is sewing up masks so fast they are flying off the machine. As a nurse for over 35 years she continues to serve in any way possible. God bless the doctors, nurses, hospital workers, and all first responders on the front lines of this battle. Thank you for all you do!**

## **OPEN:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

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## Covid-19 Update by Marie Miller

Things may be looking up. I hope. The number of cases in the US is now at 336,776—over a third of a million, ; but this is just an 8.2% increase from yesterday. Consider, if you will, that we're at a little over 24 hours since I aggregated figures for yesterday, more like 27 hours, and this looks very good, indeed. Haven't seen increases this small for a very long time, if ever. NY is still leading with 122,911 cases, just a 7% increase, and NJ is next with 37,505, a 10% increase, both well below the prior trends. Rounding out the top 10 we have MI - 15,635, CA - 15,076, LA - 13,010, MA - 12,500, FL - 12,342, PA - 11,589, IL 11,276, and WA - 7984. There are 3 more states over 5000 reported cases, 10 more over 1000, 9 + DC over 500, 9 + PR and GU over 100, and just VI and MP under 100.

There have been 9655 deaths in 49 states + DC and 3 territories. Only WY and VI have reported no deaths at this point. NY has 4161 (first drop in number of deaths since this thing started), NJ has 917, MI has 616, LA has 477, CA has 349, and WA has 344. There are 10 more states reporting over 100 deaths, 6 more reporting over 50, 18 more + DC and PR reporting over 10, and just GU and MP reporting less than 10. The rate of increase in deaths looks like it may be starting to reflect the overall reduced rate of increase in cases—at long last. We saw just a 14% increase since yesterday. And while that's still a LOT, it seems things may be moving in the right direction. We'll know more as time goes on.

I have just one additional topic for you today, but it's a doozy.

I spent much of yesterday wallowing around in a dense paper describing a thoroughgoing comparative genomic analysis of SARS-CoV-2 with other known coronaviruses. It addressed the relationship of differences we see among these viruses to the specific protein structures found in this virus and what this all adds to our knowledge. The analysis was performed by an international team, including participation by our NIH (National Institutes of Health). Because I am not a viral geneticist or a structural biochemist, this was tough sledding—which is why it took most of the day to work my way through it until I felt some assurance I understand the science well enough to help you out with it. This analysis focused on spike proteins—those little projections all over the surface of the virus that you see in pictures are called spikes. Of interest are the proteins at the tip of the spike called the RBD (receptor-binding domain), which is the part that interacts with your cells' surface so it can establish infection, and a couple of spike proteins called S1 and S2. If people who know what they're doing analyze the genome (the genetic material, here RNA, of the virus), they can frequently trace its evolutionary history in what they find. That's what happened here.

It is my hope that a little discussion of the basic science involved will help you to understand how scientists can make confident statements about the probable—and improbable—explanations being offered for the origin of this virus

Viruses tend to be very host-specific, that is, there is often just one or, at best, a small number of hosts the virus can successfully infect. Much of that specificity is due to the virus's ability or inability to bind itself to host cells; there needs to be a sort of a chemical "match" between that RBD and the host's cell surface proteins, or they can't bind at all. The closer the match, the better the virus is going to be at making you sick. If a virus is going to jump from animals to humans, that generally means the virus needs to modify its RBD in some way so it can bind to a different kind of cell. The coronaviruses that cause serious disease in humans all seem to have RBDs adapted to binding a cell-surface protein called ACE2 (angiotensin-converting enzyme 2), something we talked about a few days ago.

SARS-CoV is the virus that causes SARS, a disease that circulated about 15 years ago, threatening a pandemic, which we were fortunate and smart enough to shut down before it went there. We're going to just call it SARS virus here so things don't get confusing. (A virologist reading this would be having palpitations about now, so don't show this to a virologist, OK?) That virus is a very close relative of SARS-CoV-2, the one we're dealing with now that causes Covid-19, which we're going to call Covid virus, also to avoid confusion. Now SARS virus has an RBD sequence that is optimal for attaching to ACE2. Covid virus, on the other hand, although it also has a very high affinity for ACE2, does not have the same RBD sequence at all; in fact, its RBD has almost nothing in common with SARS virus's. We have, in fact, identified a pangolin coronavirus that, while it is overall different from Covid virus, has an RBD sequence which

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is very similar, and it doesn't look like that pangolin virus would be very good at infecting people at all. What's more, computational analysis of the RBD sequence of Covid virus predicts it wouldn't bind ACE2 very well at all. But it does. Which is puzzling.

What's going on there? What it looks like is that Covid virus, having taken a different route from animals to humans than SARS virus, evolved some novel solution for binding strongly to ACE2, something different from SARS virus that we haven't identified yet. But we know it's good at it, very good.

This constitutes pretty strong evidence Covid virus is not the result of purposeful manipulation, that is, not the result of some nefarious tinkering to create a biological weapon. That's one of the theories I keep seeing circulating on the Internet. You see, if you were a malefactor working away in a lab somewhere trying to develop a biological weapon from SARS virus, when you started engineering the virus to make it better at the pandemic-causing thing, you wouldn't mess with that RBD; it was just about perfect as it was. It would be nuts to set out to reinvent the wheel when the wheel functioned great; you'd be busy making it spread without causing symptoms—which is the primary reason SARS was controllable and Covid looks a whole lot tougher to control. The fact that this Covid virus has its own RBD is strong evidence it resulted from natural processes, not lab work. I'll have more to say on this later.

The other finding of interest in this analysis is the discovery of something called a polybasic cleavage site between the S1 and S2 proteins in the viral spike. That's odd and significant.

Here's why it matters. Proteins, when first produced by your cells, are often not functional because they're stuck to other proteins, and they have a "junk" piece inserted along the chain of building blocks they're made from, in between the protein parts that are stuck together. This is true for your own proteins and for the proteins your cells are making for the virus too. To activate the protein, you need an enzyme (called a protease) to snip the junk piece out, giving you a couple of proteins that are ready to go to work. The place where that snipping happens is called a cleavage site (cleave means to cut—like with a cleaver). What matters in a viral infection is what kind of protease is required to do the cleavage. For some viruses, the enzyme required is something like a trypsin, an enzyme found only in the upper respiratory tract. So as long as the virus hangs out in your upper respiratory tract where the trypsin is, the enzyme can snip away, producing nice functional proteins for all the baby viruses they're making. But if one of these viruses gets into your lungs, the infected lung cells make all these long, nonfunctional proteins, and viral replication screeches to a halt—can't build a virus without working proteins. Which means, of course, that virus can't cause trouble in your lungs. You have other enzymes found only in one kind of tissue, and that's part of the reason one virus infects your liver while another one infects your intestinal tract, while cold viruses are stuck with just infecting your upper respiratory tract.

A lot of coronaviruses (remember from our very first talk that there are several that just cause colds) have specific tissue affinities related to just this thing—enzyme availability. Well, Covid virus hit the jackpot here too. Between its S1 and S2 spike proteins is a "junk" sequence, or cleavage site, that is polybasic in nature (which is just a fancy reference to some loose-hanging hydrogen atoms along its amino acid sequence). This polybasic cleavage site allows efficient cleavage by a protease called furin to activate those proteins, and furin is found in tissues all over the body—including your lungs. This polybasic cleavage site has not been observed in any other related lineage B beta-coronaviruses. They're still working out the role of furin in determining infectivity and host range for Covid virus, but folks have messed around with some other coronaviruses and, from that, they know that inserting this cleavage site into a MERS-like bat virus gives it the ability to infect human cells and in dense populations of chickens, rapid replication and transmission of avian influenza virus in that population selects for the acquisition of a polybasic cleavage site in its HA (spike) protein. Same thing happens in tissue culture and in other animals. So this is a big deal for the virus.

There is one other odd thing in this genome, and that is the insertion of a spare molecule of proline, an amino acid, in the spike protein. The presence of proline causes the protein chain to bend in that location, which makes the experts think that site on the protein will be able to add some carbohydrate molecules called glycans in a process called glycosylation. This, too, is unusual for a coronavirus of this line, although beta-coronaviruses in the A and C lines demonstrate this feature. No one seems to be sure what the



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functional consequences of that are either, but it does offer some evidence about the virus's origins.

If you were manipulating coronaviruses to produce Covid virus (back to the evil scientist scenario for a moment), you would use one of several systems available for sort of reverse-engineering a virus from genetic sequences available, and you'd be all over that ideal RBD sequence from SARS virus. But this new virus is not derived from any previously-used virus backbone—AND it has this less-than-optimal RBD. These features predicate against any conclusion that the Covid virus was built in a lab. The conclusion of the analysts in this report is important enough to quote, so here it is: "Our analyses clearly show that SARS-CoV-2 is not a laboratory construct or a purposefully manipulated virus."

And then there's the other theory I've seen floating around, that scientists were studying coronaviruses in a laboratory and had an accidental escape—always accompanied by dark references to "viral institutes" near Wuhan. But while it is theoretically possible for the RBD we see to have resulted from adaptation to passage through cell cultures in a lab, finding the pangolin virus with nearly identical RBDs provides very strong evidence the adaptation happened in nature, not in a lab. Now to be clear, there have been incidents in the past where dangerous viruses have accidentally escaped their labs, so that part's not impossible. And I honestly don't know how good the containment procedures are in those Chinese labs. (Although the fact that they're in another country is no particular reason to be suspicious; viruses are being studied all over the world safely.) But there is a bunch of reasons to dismiss this speculation.

One is that this Covid virus acquired both the polybasic cleavage site AND that extra proline which leads to the predicted glycosylation. This has only happened in the past in a flu virus after prolonged passage through cell cultures. And we've established there wasn't time for that. Also generation of these changes in cell culture requires the prior isolation of a progenitor virus with very high genetic similarity, and that has never been described for this Covid virus. It would also require repeated passage in cell culture or animals with ACE2 highly similar to humans, something else not described. And finally, acquisition of the predicted glycosylation strongly suggests the involvement of an immune system, something that doesn't happen in cell cultures.

One way we assess whether a particular event is possible in nature is to see whether it's ever happened before in nature. And that was done in this analysis too. For example, there is a bat coronavirus which is genetically 96% the same as Covid virus, but its spike proteins diverge at the RBD from Covid virus's. That means most of the viral genome could well have evolved through natural selection just as it did in this bat virus. The nearly-identical RBD in the pangolin coronavirus we talked about earlier obviously evolved through natural selection, so clearly it's possible in this virus as well. And viral furin-cleavage sites are nothing new in nature either. All of this serves as predicate for the conclusion that all of the features of this virus can occur as a result of natural selection. The analysis postulates two scenarios for how this occurred:

- (1) There was a natural selection process in animals prior to zoonotic transfer.
- (2) There was a natural selection process in humans after zoonotic transfer.

For both adaptive events (mutations in the spike protein and acquisition of polybasic cleavage sites) to occur in animals would require high population density and the prior existence of ACE2 encoding genes similar to human ones in that population. It seems possible one of the adaptations (RBD) may have occurred in animals (after all, we've already seen that one in an animal) and then the other feature (polybasic cleavage site) was acquired during undetected human-to-human transmission until a pandemic could result. It was suggested as a possibility that there may have been many prior zoonotic events that produced single infections and short chains of human-to-human transmission over an extended period of time until the virus made its final zoonotic jump late last year.

We can kind of hope the second event above, adaptation in humans after the zoonotic event, is the case; it would require the same sequence of mutations to repeat, which is not likely. Each mutation is a chance event; it is improbable the same series of them will happen in that sequence again. Pre-adaptation in animals before the zoonotic event, on the other hand, would mean there's a fair risk of another occurrence like this one.

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There's plenty more we could talk about, but I'm afraid I've swamped you with science for the night. I know this stuff is dense, but I am hoping I'm giving you a shot at understanding what turns up in the science. Knowledge, after all, is power. I hope we're starting the new week with a sense of optimism—that this plague will end, that we'll be able to resume something that passes for normal life one day, and that we'll emerge from our isolation to a society that is healthier, kinder, more caring, and more tolerant of difference than the one we left behind when we went into isolation. That happens only if we each take steps to make it so. Find a way to make the world easier for someone who's struggling. They're all around you, so you won't have to look far to find them.

Take care, and stay well. We'll talk tomorrow.

Confirmed Cases by Country/Region/Sovereignty	
337,933	US
135,032	Spain
128,948	Italy
100,132	Germany
93,780	France
82,665	China

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## AREA COVID-19 CASES

	Mar. 20	Mar. 21	Mar. 22	Mar. 23	Mar. 24	Mar. 25	Mar. 26	Mar. 27	Mar. 28
Minnesota	115	137	169	235	262	287	346	398	441
Nebraska	27	42	50	52	61	68	81	89	108
Montana	15	27	34	45	51	65	90	121	147
Colorado	277	475	591	720	912	1,086	1,430	1,734	2,061
Wyoming	18	24	26	28	33	49	56	73	84
North Dakota	26	28	30	32	36	45	58	68	94
South Dakota	14	14	21	28	30	41	46	58	68
United States		15,219	33,276	43,963	54,812	69,147	85,996	104,837	124,686
US Deaths		201	417	560	780	1,046	1,300	1,711	2,191
Minnesota	115	+22	+32	+66	+27	+25	+59	+52	+43
Nebraska	27	+15	+8	+2	+9	+7	+13	+8	+19
Montana	15	+12	+7	+11	+6	+14	+25	+31	+26
Colorado	277	+198	+116	+129	+192	+174	+344	+303	+327
Wyoming	18	+6	+2	+2	+5	+16	+7	+17	+11
North Dakota	26	+2	+2	+2	+4	+9	+13	+10	+26
South Dakota	14	0	+7	+7	+2	+11	+7	+12	+10
United States		15,219	+18,057	+10,687	+10,849	+14,335	+16,849	+18,841	+19,849
US Deaths		201	+216	+143	+220	+266	+254	+411	+480

	Mar. 29	Mar. 30	Mar. 31	Apr. 1	Apr. 2	Apr. 3	Apr. 4	Apr. 5
Minnesota	503	576	629	689	742	789	865	935
Nebraska	120	153	177	214	255	285	323	367
Montana	161	177	198	217	241	263	281	298
Colorado	2,307	2,627	2,966	3,342	3,728	4,173	4,565	4,950
Wyoming	87	95	120	137	150	166	187	200
North Dakota	98	109	126	147	159	173	186	207
South Dakota	90	101	108	129	165	187	212	240
United States	143,055	164,610	189,633	216,722	245,573	278,458	312,245	337,933
US Deaths	2,513	3,170	4,081	5,137	6,058	7,159	8,503	9,653
Minnesota	+62	+73	+53	+60	+53	+47	+76	+70
Nebraska	+12	+33	+24	+37	+41	+30	+38	+44
Montana	+14	+16	+20	+19	+25	+22	+18	+17
Colorado	+246	+320	+339	+376	+386	+445	+392	+385
Wyoming	+3	+8	+25	+17	+13	+16	+21	+13
North Dakota	+4	+11	+17	+21	+12	+14	+13	+21
South Dakota	+22	+11	+7	+21	+36	+12	+25	+28
United States	+18,369	+21,555	+25,023	+27,089	+28,851	+32,885	+33,787	+25,688
US Deaths	+322	+657	+911	+1,056	+921	+1,101	1,344	+1,150

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## Dakotas COVID-19 Update

South Dakota recorded 28 more positive tests out of the 369 tests performed in the last 24 hours.

Number of Cases: +28 (Total 240)

Total Ever Hospitalized: +3 (Total 22)

Deaths: 2

Recovered: +8 (84 total)

Break down of changes in counties:

Brown: No change!

Codington: +1 Positive Test, +1 Recovered; Lawrence: +1 recovered; Lincoln: +2 positive; Minnehaha: +23 positive, +3 recovered; Pennington: +1 recovered; Spink: +1 positive, +1 recovered; Turner: +1 positive; Yankton: +1 recovered

North Dakota has had 21 new positive cases.

The NDDoH & private labs are reporting 580 total completed tests today for COVID-19, with 21 new positive cases, bringing the statewide total to 207.

State & private labs have conducted 6,787 total tests with 6,580 negative results.

63 ND patients are considered recovered.

County	Total Positive Cases	# Recovered
Aurora	1	1
Beadle	21	18
Bon Homme	1	1
Brookings	3	2
Brown	9	5
Charles Mix	2	1
Clark	1	1
Clay	3	2
Codington	10	4
Davison	3	2
Deuel	1	0
Fall River	1	1
Faulk	1	1
Hamlin	1	0
Hughes	3	2
Hutchinson	2	2
Lake	1	0
Lawrence	9	5
Lincoln	23	4
Lyman	1	1
Marshall	1	1
McCook	2	1
Meade	1	1
Minnehaha	104	18
Pennington	6	2
Roberts	4	0
Spink	3	1
Todd	1	0
Turner	4	1
Union	3	1
Yankton	14	5

SOUTH DAKOTA CASE COUNTS	
Test Results	# of Cases
Positive*	240
Negative**	5353
Pending***	0

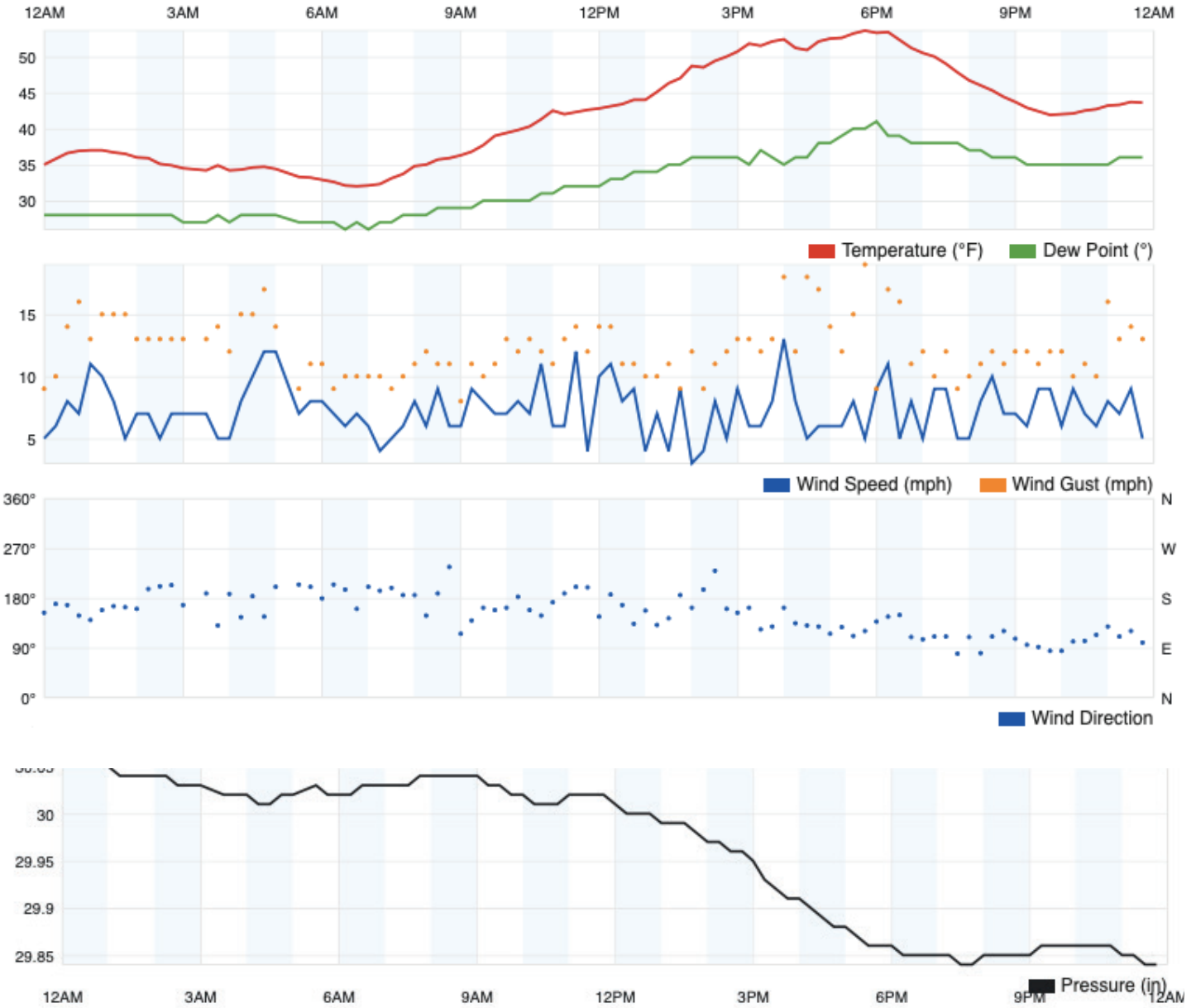
COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA	
Number of Cases	
Number of Cases	240
Ever Hospitalized*	22
Deaths**	2
Recovered	84

Age Range	# of Cases
0 to 19 years	9
20 to 29 years	47
30 to 39 years	46
40 to 49 years	43
50 to 59 years	45
60 to 69 years	33
70 to 79 years	9
80+ years	8

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs





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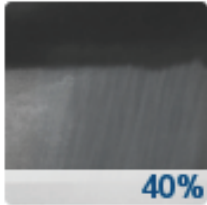
Today



Slight Chance  
Showers and  
Patchy Fog  
then Partly  
Sunny

High: 59 °F

Tonight



Chance  
Showers

Low: 41 °F

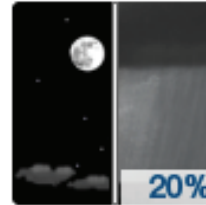
Tuesday



Decreasing  
Clouds

High: 58 °F

Tuesday  
Night



Mostly Clear  
then Slight  
Chance  
Showers

Low: 35 °F

Wednesday



Slight Chance  
Showers and  
Breezy

High: 48 °F

## Mild Start to the Week

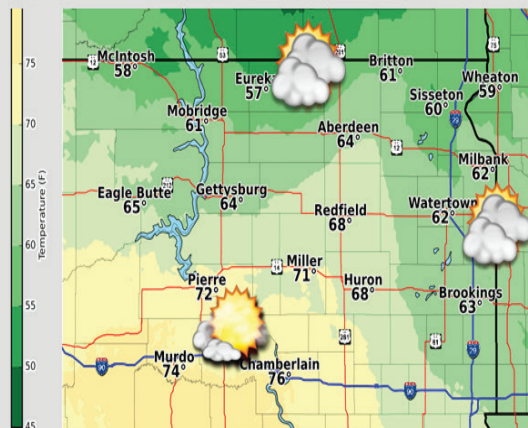
High temperatures will be 10 to 15 degrees above average today and Tuesday.

Chance for showers and thunderstorms this evening into Tues AM mainly north of US212.

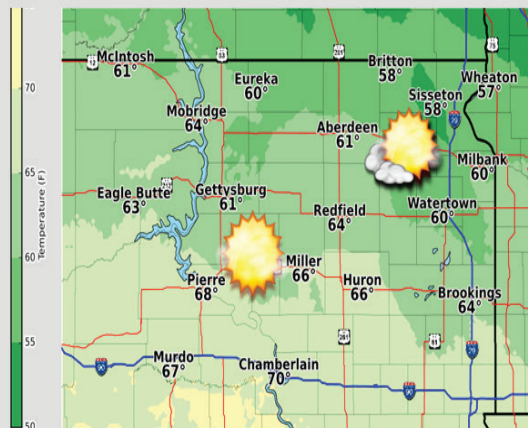
Cooler, more seasonable temperatures are expected Wednesday through Sunday.



MONDAY HIGHS



TUESDAY HIGHS



Mild, above average temperatures will be in place today and Tuesday before a cold front brings cooler air and breezy conditions Wednesday. There's a chance for showers and thunderstorms this evening into Tuesday morning mainly north of US 212.

## Today in Weather History

March 6, 1987: Twenty-eight cities in the north-central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Pickstown, South Dakota, was the hot spot in the nation with a reading of 83 degrees. The high of 71 at Saint Cloud, Minnesota, smashed their previous record by 21 degrees.

March 6, 2000: A grass fire of unknown origin was exacerbated by dry conditions and strong winds, burning 1500 acres of grassland northwest and north of Brandon in Minnehaha County. The fire threatened several homes, but no homes were damaged, although farmland and some equipment burned. In a separate event the same day, a controlled burn went out of control, exacerbated by the conditions and strong winds. The fire caused one fatality and one injury. The damage was confined to grassland.

1962: The strongest nor'easter of this century struck the Mid-Atlantic Region on March 5-9, 1962. It is known as the "Ash Wednesday Storm" and caused over \$200 million (1962 dollars) in property damage and major coastal erosion from North Carolina to Long Island, New York. In New Jersey alone, it was estimated to have destroyed or greatly damaged 45,000 homes. The Red Cross recorded that the storm killed 40 people. It hit during "Spring Tide." When the sun and moon are in phase, they produce a higher than average astronomical tide. Water reached nine feet at Norfolk (flooding begins around five feet). Houses were toppled into the ocean, and boardwalks were broken and twisted. The islands of Chincoteague and Assateague, Maryland, were completely underwater. Ocean City, Maryland, sustained significant damage mainly to the south end of the island. Winds up to 70 mph built 40-foot waves at sea. Heavy snow fell in the Appalachian Mountains. Big Meadows, southeast of Luray, recorded Virginia's greatest 24-hour snowfall with 33 inches and the most significant single storm snowfall with 42 inches. (Luray, Virginia reported 33.5 inches on March 2-3, 1994, making this later snow their maximum 24-hour snowfall total.) Roads were blocked, and electrical service was out for several days. Washington and Baltimore fell into the mixed precipitation zone. The Ash Wednesday storm is noteworthy for producing devastating tidal flooding along the Atlantic Coast as well as record snows and the interior of a Virginia. The extremely high tides and massive waves caused tremendous damage -worst in many of the hurricanes that have hit the region. Along the Atlantic Coast tide ran for 2 to 6 ft above average with 20 to 40 ft waves crashing ashore. National Airport received only 4 inches of snow with a liquid equivalent of 1.33 inches. However, close-in suburbs, such as Silver Spring, Maryland and Falls Church, Virginia and received 11 inches of snow. Outlying areas such as Rockville, Maryland received 19 inches of snow, and Leesburg, Virginia, received 20 inches of snow. Other snow totals included 15 inches at Richmond; 23 inches at Culpeper; 26 inches at Charlottesville; 32 inches at Winchester; and 35 inches at Fort Royal, Virginia, and Big Meadows on the Skyline Drive top the list with 42 inches of snow.

2014: The Great Lakes saw some of their worst ice cover in nearly four decades because of a frigid winter with months of below-freezing temperatures in large sections of the northern United States, the National Ocean, and Atmospheric Administration said. As of March 6, 2014, 92.2 percent of the five lakes were under ice, breaking a record set in 1973 but still short of the 94.7 percent established in 1979, the federal agency said.



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 54 °F at 5:44 PM**

**Low Temp: 32 °F at 6:42 AM**

**Wind: 19 mph at 5:42 PM**

**Snow**

**Record High: 85° in 1991**

**Record Low: 5° in 2018**

**Average High: 52°F**

**Average Low: 28°F**

**Average Precip in April.: 0.22**

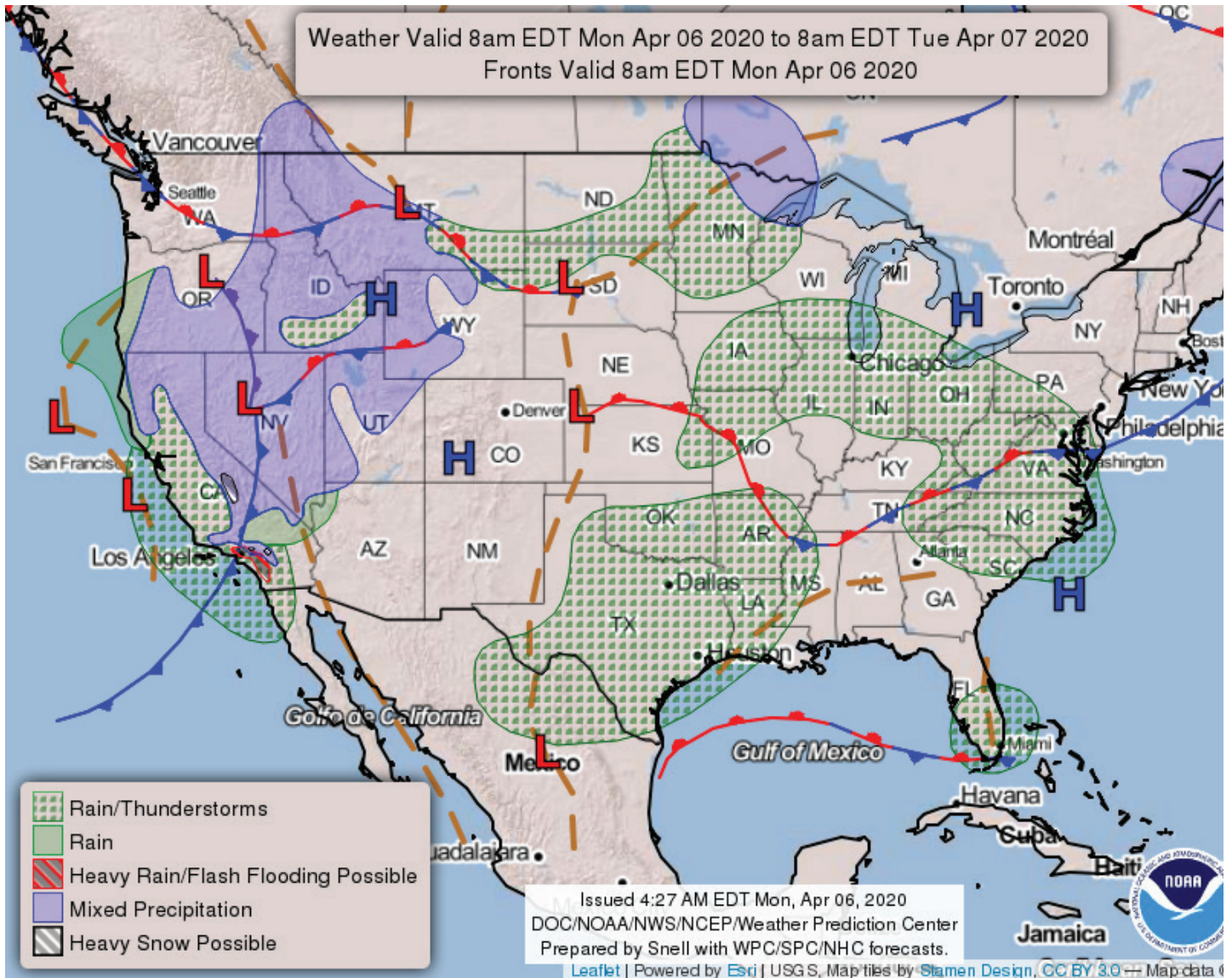
**Precip to date in April.: 0.94**

**Average Precip to date: 2.40**

**Precip Year to Date: 1.29**

**Sunset Tonight: 8:09 p.m.**

**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:02 a.m.**



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## THE KING ON HIS CROSS

Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"

They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"

Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?"

But they cried out all the more saying, "Let Him be crucified!"

When Pilate saw he could not prevail . . . he took water and washed his hands before the multitude saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this Person. You see to it."

And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children."

Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus, twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, mocked Him, spit upon Him, struck Him on the head, and led Him away to be crucified. Then they put a sign over His head: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. In the end the soldiers said: Truly this was the Son of God.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, let these Words bring to our hearts an understanding of the cost of our salvation. May we see the magnitude of Your love for us in His cross. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Matthew 27 The Roman officer and the other soldiers at the crucifixion were terrified by the earthquake and all that had happened. They said, "This man truly was the Son of God!"



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## 2020 Groton SD Community Events

- **CANCELLED** Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt - City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
  - **CANCELLED** Dueling Piano's Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion
  - **CANCELLED** Fireman's Fun Night (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
  - **POSTPONED** Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip
  - 04/26/2020 Father/Daughter dance.
  - **CANCELLED** Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, (1st Saturday in May)
  - 05/11/2020 Girls High School Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services
  - 06/05/2020 Athletic Fundraiser at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/8-10/2020 St. John's VBS
  - 06/19/2020 SDSU Golf at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/20/2020 Shriner's Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 06/22/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ladies Invitational
  - 06/26/2020 Groton Businesses Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
  - 07/16/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Golf Tourney
  - 07/31-08/04/2020 State American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton
  - 08/07/2020 Wine on Nine Event at Olive Grove Golf Course
  - 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
  - 09/13/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Couples Sunflower Classic
  - 10/09/2020 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
  - 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
  - 10/31/2020 Downtown Trick or Treat
  - 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat
  - 11/14/2020 Groton Legion Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
  - 11/26/2020 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center
  - 12/05/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
  - 12/05/2020 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
  - 01/--/2021 83rd Annual Carnival of Silver Skates
- 
- Bingo every Wednesday 6:30pm at the American Legion Post #39
  - Groton Lions Club Wheel of Meat, American Legion Post #39 7pm (Saturday nights November 30th thru April 11th)
    - Groton Lions Club Wheel of Pizza, Jungle Lanes 8pm (Saturday nights November 30th thru April 11th)
- 
- All dates are subject to change, check for updates here

## News from the Associated Press

### The Latest: South Korea health minister urges vigilance

The Associated Press undefined

The Latest on the coronavirus pandemic. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death.

#### TOP OF THE HOUR:

- 13 hospitalized, 1 dead from cruise ship with coronavirus victims in Miami
- Washington will return over 400 ventilators to be given to harder-hit states
- South Korea reports 47 new cases of coronavirus
- UN Secretary-General says domestic violence reports on rise during pandemic
- China reports 38 new coronavirus cases, all but one imported
- British Prime Minister Johnson admitted to a hospital with the coronavirus.
- Bronx Zoo tiger tests positive for the coronavirus.
- Fauci: Very good chance coronavirus "will assume a seasonal nature."

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea's vice health minister has urged vigilance to maintain hard-won gains against the new coronavirus.

Kim Gang-lip expressed concerns over loosened attitudes toward social distancing that he says puts the country at potential risk of an infection "explosion" similar to Europe and the United States.

His warning on Monday came after the country reported 47 new cases of the coronavirus, the smallest daily jump since Feb. 20. Infections have continued to wane in the worst-hit city of Daegu, where 6,781 of the country's 10,284 cases have been reported.

However, there's alarm over a steady rise in infections linked to international arrivals as students and other South Korean nationals flock back from the West amid broadening outbreaks and suspended school years. This has inflated the caseload in the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area, where about half of South Korea's 51 million people live, prompting Gyeonggi province governor Lee Jae-myung to warn last week that an "explosion in infections is almost certain."

"There's still danger that an explosion in local transmissions which we have been seeing in Europe and the United States can happen in our society at any time, which would collapse our hospital system and spike death rates," Kim said.

Kim pleaded for people to stay at home, citing smartphone data that showed increased crowds in Seoul's public parks and leisure districts over the past two weeks. While South Korea's government has shut schools and issued social-distancing guidelines for the public, it has not enforced lockdowns or ordered unessential businesses to close.

MIAMI — Authorities say 14 people have been taken to hospitals from a cruise ship that docked in Florida with coronavirus victims aboard and one of them has died.

Two fatalities were reported earlier aboard the Coral Princess, which docked Saturday in Miami. The ship had more than 1,000 passengers and nearly 900 crew members.

Authorities did not immediately disclose whether the 14 people removed for immediate medical attention had a confirmed coronavirus link.

The Princess Cruises line ship began disembarking fit passengers cleared for charter flights Sunday. The cruise line said it was delayed by a U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention policy preventing passengers from being placed on commercial flights.

Anyone with symptoms of the disease or recovering from it were being kept on ship until medically cleared.

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OLYMPIA, Wash. -- Washington Gov. Jay Inslee said the state will return more than 400 ventilators of the 500 it has received from the federal government so they can go to New York and other states hit harder by the coronavirus.

The Democratic governor said Sunday that his statewide stay-at-home order and weeks of social distancing have led to slower rates of infections and deaths in Washington.

Washington state has 7,666 confirmed cases of the virus and 322 deaths, according to a Johns Hopkins University tally on Sunday afternoon. New York has more than 122,000 confirmed cases and more than 4,000 deaths.

Washington received 500 ventilators last month from the Strategic National Stockpile.

"I've said many times over the last few weeks: We are in this together," Inslee said. "This should guide all of our actions at an individual and state level in the coming days and weeks."

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea has reported 47 new cases of the coronavirus and three more fatalities, bringing its totals to 10,284 infections and 186 deaths.

South Korea's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Monday said at least 769 of the infections were linked to passengers arriving from overseas, with most of the cases detected in the past three weeks in the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area.

The country's caseload has slowed from early March, when it was reporting around 500 new cases a day, but officials have raised concern over a steady rise in infections imported from overseas or occurring in hospitals, nursing homes and other live-in facilities.

During the weekend, officials extended a government guideline urging people to social distance to slow the spread of the virus by two weeks, guarding against increasing infections in the Seoul metropolitan area and broadening outbreaks in Europe and the United States.

UNITED NATIONS — United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says there has been "a horrifying global surge in domestic violence" in recent weeks as fear of the coronavirus pandemic has grown along with its social and economic consequences.

The U.N. chief, who appealed on March 23 for an immediate cease-fire in conflicts around the world to tackle COVID-19, said in a statement Sunday night it is now time to appeal for an end to all violence, "everywhere, now."

Guterres said that "for many women and girls, the threat looms largest where they should be safest — in their own homes."

"And, so, I make a new appeal today for peace at home — and in homes — around the world," he said.

The secretary-general said in some countries, which he didn't name, "the number of women calling support services has doubled."

At the same time, he said, health care providers and police are overwhelmed and understaffed, local support groups are paralyzed or short of funds, and some domestic violence shelters are closed while others are full.

"I urge all governments to make the prevention and redress of violence against women a key part of their national response plans for COVID-19," Guterres said.

BEIJING -- China on Monday reported 39 new cases of coronavirus infection — 38 of them imported — one additional death, 10 suspected cases and 1,047 asymptomatic cases under observation.

There were no new confirmed or suspected cases in the epicenter city of Wuhan, where a 14-week lockdown is due to be lifted on Wednesday.

China has now recorded a total of 81,708 cases and 3,331 deaths since the COVID-19 illness was first detected there in late December.

LONDON — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has been admitted to a hospital with the new coronavirus. Johnson's office says he is being admitted for tests because he still has symptoms, 10 days after testing

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positive for the virus.

Downing St. says the hospitalization is a "precautionary step" and he remains in charge of the government. Johnson, 55, has been quarantined in his Downing St. residence since being diagnosed with COVID-19 on March 26.

**NEW YORK** — A tiger at the Bronx Zoo has tested positive for the new coronavirus, in what is believed to be the first known infection in an animal in the U.S. or a tiger anywhere, federal officials and the zoo said Sunday.

The 4-year-old Malayan tiger, and six other tigers and lions that have also fallen ill, are believed to have been infected by a zoo employee, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said. The first animal started showing symptoms March 27, and all are expected to recover, said the zoo, which has been closed to the public since March 16.

The finding raises new questions about transmission of the virus in animals. The USDA says there are no known cases of the virus in U.S. pets or livestock.

The coronavirus outbreaks around the world are driven by person-to-person transmission, experts say. There have been reports of a small number of pets outside the United States becoming infected after close contact with contagious people, including a Hong Kong dog that tested positive for a low level of the pathogen in February and early March. Hong Kong agriculture authorities concluded that pet dogs and cats couldn't pass the virus to human beings but could test positive if exposed by their owners.

Boeing said it will continue its shutdown of production indefinitely at its Seattle-area facilities because of the spread of the coronavirus.

The company in an email to Washington employees said it is extending the planned two-week shutdown rather than reopening Wednesday. The decision affects about 30,000 of Boeing's 70,000 employees in the state.

The company said the decision is based on the health and safety of its employees, assessment of the coronavirus spread, supply chain concerns and recommendations from government health officials.

Republican U.S. Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart of Florida, who was the first congressman to test positive for coronavirus, announced on Twitter that he is now virus free.

"Today, after being deemed #COVID19 free by my doctor, I was able to reunite with my family in Miami. Though still a bit weak, I feel well, & I applied to participate in the @RedCross plasma donation to help those with serious or immediately life-threatening COVID-19 infections."

**NEW ORLEANS** — The city's Catholic population struggled to celebrate Palm Sunday at a time when the city's churches have stopped holding services under the state's stay-at-home mandate.

That has meant finding creative ways for pastors to meet the spiritual needs of their parishioners. Rev. Emmanuel Mulenga is the pastor at Saint Augustine Catholic Church, a nearly 200-year-old church in the city's historically African American Treme neighborhood.

On Palm Sunday, the church would normally have a special ceremony to commemorate Jesus's entry into Jerusalem. This Sunday, he still gave out palm fronds to parishioners who wanted them while still adhering to social distancing guidelines. He blessed the fronds and put them on a table near the back of the church where people could easily spot them when they came in the back door.

About 50 to 60 parishioners turned out, Mulenga said.

"Despite the social distancing ... the spiritual aspects of our lives, faith, still continues, and I personally believe that under the present circumstances we need those personal connections and prayer even more," he said.

The company 3M said it is working with German authorities to determine whether an incorrect report of



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one of its mask shipments being diverted to the United States was due to fraud.

Berlin authorities had said last week that a shipment of 200,000 masks intended for Berlin police had been seized in Thailand en route from China.

In a statement Sunday, 3M said it had no record of an order for Berlin police and has offered to help governments verify the authenticity of any offers to sell protective masks, which are used to prevent the spread of coronavirus to health workers and others.

Louisiana health officials reported 68 coronavirus-related deaths on Sunday, marking the state's biggest jump in reported deaths since the outbreak began.

The Louisiana Department of Health reported the figures on its website Sunday. The number of infections reported to the state also increased by more than 500 cases from 12,496 to 13,010.

Before Sunday, the largest number of deaths reported in a single day was 60. The numbers represent when the tests were reported to the state, not necessarily when the infections or deaths occurred.

Louisiana and the New Orleans area have been an epicenter for the virus, and Gov. John Bel Edwards has repeatedly warned of looming shortages for ventilators and intensive care units.

WASHINGTON — The District of Columbia has announced 96 more positive infections from the COVID-19 coronavirus, bringing the total up to 998, with 22 deaths.

Mayor Muriel Bowser has issued a stay-home order for Washington's approximately 700,000 residents. Neighboring Maryland and Virginia have done the same. Bowser has declared a state of emergency, shuttered all schools and ordered all non-essential businesses to close. White House and Capitol tours have been cancelled and the National Zoo, Smithsonian museum network and Kennedy Center have closed.

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Gov. Larry Hogan announced new mandates for Maryland's nursing homes in order to dull the spread of COVID-19, which has invaded dozens of facilities in the state.

Under the threat of criminal penalties, Hogan's order and directive from his health secretary demand that nursing home employees in close contact with residents wear facemasks, gloves, gowns and other personal protective gear when providing care.

Nursing homes must have expedited testing for the new coronavirus and designated areas where residents with known or suspected COVID-19 are treated, according to the new rules.

Violating the rules is a misdemeanor punishable by fines and prison.

Hogan said more than 80 nursing homes and long-term care facilities have positive cases or clusters of cases. The most intense cluster is at the Pleasant View Nursing Home in Mount Airy, where four more residents diagnosed with COVID-19 have now died, bringing the total to nine, health officials announced this weekend. More than 100 residents or staff have tested positive there.

The Maryland health department issued guidance nearly four weeks ago to restrict resident visitations and control infections.

ATLANTA — One of the daughters of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. will help lead a new outreach committee in Georgia as the state copes with the coronavirus, Gov. Brian Kemp announced.

Bernice King, CEO of The King Center, will co-chair the committee with Engaged Futures Group LLC President Leo Smith, Kemp said. More than a dozen other members, including business and nonprofit leaders, make up the committee.

Officials did not immediately release additional details about what the committee will do.

Georgia has seen more than 200 deaths in the state and more than 1,200 have been hospitalized. Total infections confirmed in the state exceed 6,600.

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. — The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in South Dakota rose to 240 Sunday as President Donald Trump declared a major disaster for the state.

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Trump's order directs federal assistance to supplement state, tribal and local recovery efforts in areas hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

The South Dakota Department of Health reported 28 new confirmed cases of the coronavirus Sunday. That number does not include tests pending in private labs or those who are not being tested.

Minnehaha County reports 23 new positive tests, bringing the total number of cases in South Dakota's most populous county to 104. Eighteen of those patients in Minnehaha County have recovered.

**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico** — The ACLU says it is seeking an injunction to block part of Puerto Rico's strict curfew against the new coronavirus and argues that some of its restrictions are unconstitutional.

The curfew imposed March 15 has shuttered non-essential businesses in the U.S. territory and ordered people to stay home from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. and remain there even outside those hours unless they have to buy food or medicine, go to the bank or have an emergency or health-related situation.

Violators face a \$5,000 fine or a six-month jail term, and police have cited hundreds of people. A spokesman for the U.S. territory's Justice Department said Sunday there was no immediate comment.

It is the first time the ACLU has decided to file a lawsuit in a U.S. jurisdiction related to a coronavirus curfew.

**Defense Secretary Mark Esper** has issued new requirements for those visiting or working on Department of Defense installations regarding the use of cloth face coverings.

Esper says that "to the extent practical," all individuals on DOD property "will wear" the face coverings when they cannot maintain 6 feet of social distance from others.

The guidance is effective immediately. It follows a recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that encourages people, especially in areas hit hard by the spread of the coronavirus, to use rudimentary coverings such as T-shirts, bandannas and non-medical masks to cover their faces while outdoors.

Esper outlined the new requirements in a memorandum to senior military leaders Sunday.

Esper said the requirement doesn't apply to a service member's personal residence on a military installation. But it does apply to work centers and other public areas.

He says exceptions may be approved by local commanders or supervisors and then submitted up the chain of command for awareness.

**PARIS** — France reported 357 deaths in hospitals from the virus in a single day Sunday but showed signs that its spread is slowing after 20 days of national confinement.

The country remains among the hardest hit in the world, with 8,078 confirmed deaths since the virus arrived in January. More than a quarter of those who died were in nursing homes, according to figures from the national health service Sunday night.

France's intensive care units continue to fill up fast, with 390 new arrivals since Saturday for a total of 6,978 people in critical care beds. But the daily growth has been slowing, and 250 people left intensive care in the same one-day period. Most of those in intensive care are older, but 106 are under 30 years old.

While still high, the number of new deaths in hospitals dropped Sunday for the second day straight and was the lowest since March 29.

France continued Sunday to transport critically ill patients out of saturated regions to those with more hospital space and has brought in hundreds of medical personnel to help in the overwhelmed Paris region.

**WASHINGTON** — Dr. Anthony Fauci says there a very good chance the new coronavirus "will assume a seasonal nature" because it is unlikely to be under control globally.

Fauci is director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. He says the virus is unlikely to be completely eradicated from the planet this year. That means the U.S. could see the "beginning of a resurgence" during the next flu season.

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Fauci says the prospect of a resurgence is the reason the U.S. is working so hard to get its preparedness "better than it was." He says that includes working to develop a vaccine and conducting clinical trials on therapeutic interventions.

Fauci also says states that don't have stay-at-home orders are not putting the rest of the country at risk as much as they are putting themselves at risk.

Fauci spoke on CBS's "Face the Nation."

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Some Kentucky churches held Palm Sunday services in defiance of Gov. Andy Beshear's warning against in-person worship.

Dozens of people were at Maryville Baptist Church in Louisville on Sunday, news outlets reported. A video showed a pianist playing and choir members singing during the late morning service.

Louisville's Our Savior Lutheran Church streamed its in-person service live on YouTube. The church had required online registration beforehand and restricted seating to every other pew. The video stream did not show the audience.

Beshear warned during his daily briefing on Saturday that mass gatherings "are spreading the coronavirus. "We care about each other in this state, and our faith guides us and gives us the wisdom to do the right thing to protect each other."

Some states, including Florida, have made exemptions to allow religious gatherings to proceed during the coronavirus. Kentucky does not have that exemption.

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Aberdeen seamstress switches from bears to masks

By **KELDA J.L. PHARRIS** Aberdeen American News

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — Mr. Rogers always said that when in a crisis, look for the helpers.

It was wisdom he took to heart from his own mother.

In Aberdeen, those with sewing skills have taken to making cloth masks in order to help increase the longevity of personal protective equipment used by health care workers.

You might know Laurie Martin, or maybe you know her bears. Laurie's Better Bears is a business started from grief. The bears are created out of a lost loved one's T-shirt or kerchief or blanket. But for now, the bears are taking a back seat while Martin sets her sewing machine to work on making masks to help with the COVID-19 pandemic.

A friend had sent her a pattern, and she also consulted with her sister Pam, who lives in Minnesota. She tweaked them a bit to make them a little easier to produce while also making sure the masks fulfill their purpose of keeping health care workers and high-risk individuals safe.

Her bears cost around \$30, but the masks she is making are free.

"No, I don't want any money. This is all donation from me. If I can help, I'll help out any way I can," Martin told the Aberdeen American News by phone. "I think they work great. Only thing is, I'm out of elastic. There's no place that has elastic in town. I bought out Hobby Lobby."

The Aberdeen craft store is out of elastic. Its supply warehouse in Oklahoma has been shut down after being deemed a nonessential service. The company is trying to get it reopened. Elastic at Aberdeen's Walmart is in short supply or completely out, depending on the type, per an online search of its site.

That doesn't really stop Martin, though. She's a gifted seamstress and modified the masks to make tie versions as well. She makes adult and child-sized masks and was delivering a bunch of masks to Avera on a recent Wednesday.

"I'll still do the bears for anyone who needs it, of course," she said. But for now it's the masks that are keeping Martin's machine humming.

## Dancing classes, theater group find online audiences

By TANYA MANUS Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Spring theater performances, dance recitals and a symphony concert came to a standstill as COVID-19 prompted closures and cancellations. Though live shows can't go on right now, local actors and dancers are using online tools to take entertainment and classes safely into living rooms across the Black Hills.

### Dance classes online

Spring typically means Prima School of Dancing is gearing up for its annual recitals. More than 400 students were preparing for two recitals. Prima's owner and director of 17 years, Christy Remington, stopped her in-person classes and postponed the recitals as soon as Gov. Kristi Noem called for schools to shut down.

"I don't know if the world has dealt with something like this to where literally it seems every community (worldwide) has been dramatically affected by needing to be quarantined," she said. "When (the school shutdown) happened, we went to bat to see what we could offer our students."

Prima set up a portal with videos, recital information and more on its website and created a private Facebook page for families. Last month, Remington and her staff launched more than 50 classes for all ages and all styles of dance online. Prima plans to continue online classes throughout April.

"We tried to hit the ground running to support our families. For our students, it can be an isolating time. Anything we can do to connect with them (provides a sense of community)," she said. "It's been so awesome to communicate with my students and watch them dance."

"It's been a real learning experience but just an incredible blessing to stay connected to students and families during this time," Remington told the Rapid City Journal.

"We've tried to encourage ... posting a picture of dancing in your jammies, or post a picture of a family dance party, and if they're taking classes, we love it if they comment or post a picture. It's been really fun for us to have such a positive place of encouragement. So many of our families have been so appreciative and gracious."

The private Facebook page includes resources from the dancing community at large, she said, such as links to free classes by professional dancers. "Our students are so excited to see and hear from them because they recognize them," Remington said. She compares the opportunity to take online classes from well-known "dance celebrities" to having a personal drill session with NBA players.

"(Professional dancers) want people to keep moving and keep growing. They know how much dance can do for an individual. It's so much more than learning how to do a proper pirouette. There are so many positive aspects as far as mental and emotional health as well as physical health," Remington said.

Remington has multiple back-up plans in place for rescheduling Prima's recitals, based on what is recommended by local, state and national government agencies. The afternoon recital will have a Peter Pan theme. The evening recital theme, selected before the spread of coronavirus, is "we love our community."

"It's almost even more fitting now and each of us teachers who do choreography for each class selected a nonprofit, and we are dedicating our dance to that nonprofit that is locally represented here in some way," Remington said. "So many teachers selected nonprofits that are very near and dear to their hearts. It's neat to allow students to become more aware of the organizations that are the heart of our community."

When the school shutdown was announced, the Academy of Dance Arts rapidly closed its three locations and took its classes online, a move that director Julie McFarland believes is good for her students' and families' emotional well-being as much as their dance skills.

"Within 48 hours, I had 120 classes online" for the 400 families the Academy serves, McFarland said. "We were able to run all of the classes we offer. ... I just really felt it was important for our sense of normalcy in all of this."

McFarland also created a website where Academy families can find resources from dance companies and schools nationwide, Zoom links to classes, class information and links to choreography students who were rehearsing for a May 2 performance.

This year's spring production was going to celebrate the academy's 60th anniversary and McFarland's 20th



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anniversary as director. McFarland tentatively has rescheduled the performance for mid-September and is focusing on celebrating and helping students navigate the current changes in their lives in positive ways.

"I wanted to keep (our dancers') heads in a very safe, healthy place in the midst of things that are very real concerns," she said. "You only get one childhood. It's important we lead and model positive outcomes, and we can get through this together."

The Academy will continue its online classes through April. "There's so much joy in what's happening and the feedback we're getting from families has just been overwhelming," McFarland said.

She's added a morning stretching class for students' moms, and McFarland hopes having online classes will ease parental stress.

"One of the pluses is ... parents can get a little bit of relief now. It's a chance for us to teach a class so mom or dad can make dinner or have (self-care) time," she said.

Barefoot Dance Studio announced on its Facebook page and by email March 28 that the studio would set up a variety of pre-recorded and live-streamed classes to meet students' needs. Online classes will continue through April. Barefoot has a showcase, "Barefoot Silver Linings," planned but a date has not been confirmed.

"We all want to see your faces. We miss you terribly," said owner Andrea Schaefer on a Facebook video. "We're going to get through this."

## Ghostlight Series

In mid-March, Black Hills Community Theatre was days away from debuting "Tommy The Musical" and had just cast the roles for its final show of the 2019-2020 season. Those productions have been postponed for at least eight weeks, BHCT announced by email. BHCT's Cherry Street Players and Well Done Players groups also had performances planned in April that are postponed, according to BHCT office administrator Ryan Puffer.

To keep audiences entertained at home, BHCT performers are starring in "Ghostlight Series." Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday viewers can tune in to [facebook.com/BHCommunityTheater/](https://www.facebook.com/BHCommunityTheater/) to see exclusive web content. The series launched March 23, and viewers who want to support BHCT can donate at [bhct.org](https://www.bhct.org).

"Basically, we feel it is still our job to educate and entertain the community with good theater," Puffer said.

BHCT fans will see many familiar faces, Puffer said, as local adult actors perform a mix of music and theater of their choosing. "I imagine it will be (material) they wanted to do and finally have a chance to work on," he said. "We'll keep cranking out content as long as we can, as long as (coronavirus precautions) go on. ... We're all just trying to get through."

## 'Requiem' canceled

Black Hills Symphony Orchestra and the 72-member Dakota Choral Union have canceled their spring concert "Mozart Requiem" that was scheduled for April 4. Dr. Jon Nero, artistic director for Dakota Choral Union, said he hoped the concert could be rescheduled for the fall.

Dakota Choral Union's cantorei group also had an April concert planned that has been canceled, according to Gina Plooster, vice president of the Dakota Choral Union board.

"We are heartbroken that we are unable to perform for you this spring, and are looking forward to seeing you next season! Look for a preview of our 2020-2021 season in the coming weeks. As Frank Sinatra said, "The best is yet to come!" BHSU music director Bruce Knowles said in a March 18 Facebook post announcing the symphony concert cancellation.

Meanwhile, although online concerts are not planned, music lovers can visit [facebook.com/bhsymphony/](https://www.facebook.com/bhsymphony/) and [facebook.com/DakotaChoralUnion](https://www.facebook.com/DakotaChoralUnion) for updates.

## South Dakota virus cases up to 240; Trump declares disaster

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in South Dakota rose to 240 Sunday as President Donald Trump declared a major disaster for the state.

Trump's order directs federal assistance to supplement state, tribal and local recovery efforts in areas hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

The South Dakota Department of Health reported 28 new confirmed cases of the coronavirus Sunday. That number does not include tests pending in private labs or those who are not being tested for the disease.

Minnehaha County reports 23 new positive tests, bringing the total number of cases in South Dakota's most populous county to 104. Eighteen of those patients in Minnehaha County have recovered.

South Dakota's death total remains at two, but that does not include the death of state Rep. Bob Glanzer of Huron, who was hospitalized after becoming ill with the coronavirus. Avera Prince of Peace said a resident of their retirement home died, which would bring the state's death count to four, the Argus Leader reported.

Sunday was the fourth straight day that South Dakota has recorded more than 20 positive tests.

Reported hospitalizations from the disease increased to 22. Of reported cases, 84 have recovered.

Older adults and people with existing health problems are more susceptible to severe illness or death from the virus, which generally causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people.

## 5 things to know today - that aren't about the virus

By The Associated Press undefined

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. WHERE A GENOCIDE GRAVE WAS FOUND Authorities in Rwanda say a valley dam that could contain about 30,000 bodies has been discovered more than a quarter-century after the country's genocide in which 800,000 ethnic Tutsi and Hutus who tried to protect them were killed.

2. PIVOTAL FIGURE IN TRUMP IMPEACHMENT DISAPPOINTED BY OUSTER Inspector General Michael Atkinson was fired by the president for providing an anonymous whistleblower complaint to Congress on Trump's pressure to get Ukraine to investigate Joe Biden and son.

3. PEACE DEAL NEAR BREAKING POINT The Taliban accused Washington of violations that included drone attacks on civilians and also chastised the Afghan government for delaying the release of 5,000 Taliban prisoners promised in the agreement.

4. RECOVERY EFFORTS TO RESUME FOR MOTHER, SON Authorities will continue the search in the Chesapeake Bay for the bodies of the daughter and a grandson of former Maryland Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend.

5. BEST NCAA TOURNAMENT GAME OF ALL TIME? A panel of Associated Press sports writers voted this buzzer-beater the No. 1 men's basketball game in the history of the NCAA Tournament.

## Trump sees limits of presidency in avoiding blame for virus

By STEVE PEOPLES, JILL COLVIN and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is confronting the most dangerous crisis a U.S. leader has faced this century as the coronavirus spreads and a once-vibrant economy falters. As the turmoil deepens, the choices he makes in the critical weeks ahead will shape his reelection prospects, his legacy and the character of the nation.

The early fallout is sobering. In the White House's best-case scenario, more than 100,000 Americans will die and millions more will be sickened. At least 10 million have already lost their jobs, and some economists warn it could be years before they find work again. The S&P 500 index has plunged more than 20%, and the U.S. surgeon general predicted on Sunday that this week will be "our Pearl Harbor moment" as the death toll climbs.

Those grim realities are testing Trump's leadership and political survival skills unlike any challenge he has faced in office, including the special counsel investigation and the impeachment probe that imperiled his presidency. Trump appears acutely aware that his political fortunes will be inextricably linked to his handling of the pandemic, alternating between putting himself at the center of the crisis with lengthy daily briefings and distancing himself from the crisis by pinning the blame for inadequate preparedness on the states.

Trump and those around him increasingly argue he is reaching the limits of his power to alter the trajectory of the outbreak and the economic fallout, according to White House officials and allies, many of whom

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were granted anonymity to discuss the situation candidly. The federal government has issued guidelines that in many areas have resulted in the shutdown of all but essential businesses, throwing the economy into a tailspin. The remaining options, the officials argue, are largely on the margins.

The limits of the presidency are self-imposed to some extent as the Trump administration continues to cede authority to state and local governments, which have adopted a patchwork of inconsistent social distancing policies. Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, a Democrat, prickled at the suggestion that the Republican president has limited options, calling it "a diminished view of the presidential responsibility."

"Was Franklin Delano Roosevelt done with his work 30 days after Pearl Harbor? Heavens, no. That's ludicrous," Inslee said in an interview. "For a person who's struggling to get (personal protective equipment) to my nurses and test kits to my long-term care facilities, that is more than disappointing. It's deeply angering."

White House advisers note that Trump has already pulled vast levers to blunt the impact of the pandemic. He worked with Congress to pass a record \$2.2 trillion rescue package; a fourth package is expected in the coming weeks. The Federal Reserve, which is technically independent of the White House, has unleashed another \$4 trillion.

The administration extended for another month new social distancing recommendations calling for those who are sick, are elderly or have serious health conditions to stay home. And Trump has used the authority granted to him under the Defense Production Act to try to force private companies to manufacture critical supplies, though some have faulted him for not using the tool early or aggressively enough.

Those who are dying now were likely infected weeks ago, and most highly impacted states across the nation have already taken drastic steps — unthinkable just months ago — forcing their residents to stay in their homes. And though the federal government has faced widespread criticism to do more to force the production of critical supplies, it's already too late for most new production to blunt the oncoming wave.

"I really think he's done everything humanly possible. I don't know what else he could do," said Jerry Falwell Jr., the president of Liberty University and a Trump confidant.

By delegating significant responsibility to state leaders and the business community, Trump can continue to approach his job as he often has: as a spectator pundit-in-chief, watching events unfold on television with the rest of the nation and weighing in with colorful Twitter commentary.

But governors across the nation, including some Republicans, have screamed for additional assistance from the federal government. They warn of dangerous shortages of protective equipment for medical professionals on the front lines of the outbreak and ventilators that can help keep the death toll from exploding. Other critics suggest Trump can take a much more aggressive posture in forcing stricter social distancing rules upon reluctant state officials, while ordering all domestic flights and international arrivals grounded.

There is some debate about how visible the president should be as the crisis escalates. Inside the White House, some fear Trump's continued role as the face of the government's response will be increasingly dangerous politically as things get worse.

Trump is insistent that he remain in front of the public, where he can shower praise on his own performance and make the case for deflecting responsibility. He has also tried to take credit for averting a worst-case scenario in which more than 2 million Americans could die.

The last president to face a crisis of comparable scale and depth was Herbert Hoover, a Republican who held office during the onset of the Great Depression, according to Yale University historian Joanne Freeman. Like Trump in some ways, Hoover resisted sweeping federal government intervention to address the economic crisis of the early 1930s.

Freeman noted that the results were disastrous for the nation's economy and Hoover's presidency. As the nation slipped deeper into depression, he suffered a landslide loss in 1932 to Roosevelt.

The American public has mixed reviews for Trump's performance, although his polling numbers have been ticking up.

The latest polling from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found Trump's approval ratings are among the highest of his presidency, with 44% supporting his oversight of the pandemic. State and local leaders have earned much higher marks.

While few are thinking about traditional politics, Election Day is just seven months away.

Republicans have seized on the absence of the leading Democratic rival, former Vice President Joe Biden, who has struggled to break through the dire daily news cycle despite frequent appearances on cable television from a newly created television studio in his home basement.

"Biden is inconsequential for the next three months, and that's weird," said Democratic pollster Paul Maslin. "I mean, this is the Trump show, for better or worse."

Former Trump aide Steve Bannon dismissed traditional politics as an afterthought as the nation enters a critical month to blunt the spread of the virus, yet the man who helped elect Trump four years ago said the political stakes could not be more dire.

"Every day for President Trump is now Nov. 3," Bannon said, referencing Election Day.

There is no political playbook for a crisis of this magnitude. For the foreseeable future, there will be no more political rallies, traditional fundraisers or door-to-door canvassing that makes up the lifeblood of modern campaigns.

The Trump campaign 2020 slogan — "Keep America Great" — is already painfully disconnected from the reality on the ground in most states now fighting massive unemployment and health concerns.

Campaign spokesman Tim Murtaugh described the evolution of Trump's messaging in the midst of a pandemic this way: "Our argument is that it was President Trump's leadership that built the economy up to such heights in the first place, and he's the one to lead us back up again."

He said the virus has "caused dramatic increase in desire" by the president's supporters to get involved in the campaign, even if most have been encouraged not to leave their homes.

And while they believe his ability to implement new policy solutions may be limited, some Trump allies stressed his rhetorical ability to comfort an anxious nation.

"In the minds and the hearts of the American people, his ability to carry out the rhetorical functions of the presidency — to encourage, to comfort, to rally — those are among the most essential elements of leadership in a moment of crisis," said Ralph Reed, chairman of the Faith & Freedom Coalition and a member of the White House Faith Initiative.

"It is critical right now to be a consoler-in-chief, to keep people's spirits up, to give people optimism and hope," Reed said, "and also show empathy and share in the sorrows of the struggling."

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Peoples reported from New York. Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire in New York and Thomas Beaumont in Des Moines, Iowa, contributed to this report.

## **The Latest: Lebanon asks world for help amid new coronavirus**

### **The Associated Press undefined**

The Latest on the coronavirus pandemic. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death.

#### **TOP OF THE HOUR:**

- The United States and Britain brace for soaring death tolls this week.
- Lebanon's president appeals to world ambassadors for assistance.
- Czech government leaders look to relax virus restrictions.

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**BEIRUT** — Lebanon's President Michel Aoun has appealed for the international community to help the country that is passing through its worst economic and financial crisis in decades, made worse in recent weeks by the new coronavirus.

Aoun said in a speech Monday in front of ambassadors of the International Support Group for Lebanon that includes the U.N., U.S., China, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Britain, EU and the Arab League that Beirut was getting ready to launch work to revive the economy when coronavirus hit the world.

"We are facing all these challenges and welcome any international assistance," Aoun said adding that the presence of a million Syrian refugees is adding to the crisis.



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Lebanon has reported 541 cases of coronavirus and 19 deaths.

Also in Lebanon, which has been imposing a lockdown for weeks, security forces began implementing strict measures that allow vehicles with even or odd plate numbers to drive for three days a week each. Driving will be banned on Sundays to try limit the spread of the virus.

**PRAGUE** — Czech government ministers say the country is set to gradually relax some restrictions imposed to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

Interior Minister Jan Hamacek, who heads the government's crisis committee that deals with the outbreak, says that he is proposing to cancel the ban for the Czechs to travel abroad as of April 14. Hamacek says that the border checks would remain in place and people would be allowed to travel only under specific rules that still have to be finalized.

Currently, the Czechs are barred from leaving the country and foreigners are barred from entering it.

Hamacek, however, says that all tough restrictions on movement within the country won't be relaxed for Easter.

Health Minister Adam Vojtech says the government is also set to discuss a proposal to allow more small stores to reopen, depending on the development of the epidemic.

The Cabinet will decide on all those measures later this week.

The Czech Republic has 4,591 people infected with the virus, 72 have died, according to the Health Ministry figures released on Monday.

**MADRID** — Coronavirus-related fatalities and recorded infections continued to drop on Monday in Spain, although authorities warned of possible distortions by a slower reporting of figures over the weekend.

The country's health ministry reported 637 new deaths for the previous 24 hours, the lowest fatality toll in 13 days, for a total of over 13,000 since the pandemic hit the country. New recorded infections were also the lowest in two weeks: 4,273 bringing the total of confirmed cases over 135,000.

Hospitals are also reporting that the pace of incoming patients to their emergency wards is slowing down, giving a much needed respite to overburdened medical workers.

Mimicking the "Noah's Ark" approach seen in China and other Asian countries, the government is putting together a list of venues, hotels and sports centers where patients who test positive but show no symptoms could be isolated to avoid infecting relatives.

**TOKYO** — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has said he is preparing to announce a 108 trillion yen (\$1 trillion) economic package to help Japan weather the coronavirus pandemic.

Abe told reporters Monday that he plans to disclose details of the package as early as Tuesday.

Japan, the world's third-biggest economy, was already in a contraction late last year before the virus outbreak walloped business and travel. The government has been slow to roll out containment measures, on a piecemeal basis, and only recently announced it would postpone the Tokyo 2020 Olympics by one year.

A surge in infections has prompted Abe and other leaders to discuss more stringent methods to contain the pandemic. Abe is expected to announce a state of emergency on Tuesday, at least for the hardest-hit big cities, such as Tokyo.

**SINGAPORE** — Singapore has placed nearly 20,000 foreign workers under quarantine in their dormitories after an increasing number in the community were found to be infected with COVID-19.

The country has gazetted two foreign dormitories as isolation areas, which means that the thousands of workers living on both sites will not be able to leave their rooms for 14 days, according to a press release by Singapore's ministry of health on April 5. Combined, the two dormitories have so far seen over 90 cases of COVID-19 infections.

The move comes as Singapore sees a spike in local cases of COVID-19, with a record 116 such cases on Sunday. Singapore will also effectively enter a lockdown from Tuesday, closing schools and workplaces

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deemed to provide nonessential services for a month.

Workers under quarantine will continue to be paid salaries, the ministry said. It is also working with all dormitory operators in Singapore to reduce the density of their residents by transferring some workers to alternative accommodation during this period.

VIENNA — Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz says his government aims to start allowing some shops to reopen next week at the beginning of a long, phased return to normal life.

Kurz said that the aim is to allow small shops and garden centers to reopen next Tuesday, with a limited number of customers who must wear masks. He said that government hopes to reopen the rest of the shops, as well as hairdressing salons, on May 1. Restaurants and hotels won't be able to open until at least mid-May. Events will remain banned until the end of June.

Existing restrictions on people's movement, which were imposed three weeks ago and set to expire on April 13, are being extended until the end of the month.

Austria had some 12,000 confirmed cases of the coronavirus, including 220 deaths, as of Monday.

TAIPEI, Taiwan — Taiwan has replaced its tourism chief and ordered vacationers who visited crowded scenic sites over the recent holiday weekend to avoid public spaces as it strives to maintain its relative success in containing the coronavirus.

Tourism Bureau Director-General Chou Yung-hui was demoted and moved to a new job after news emerged that a subordinate had abused his powers to skirt procedures on behalf of his son, leading to the infection of another staffer at the bureau.

That staffer then infected his five-year-old son, forcing the boy's kindergarten to be closed for 14 days. None of the other students or teachers were found to be infected, according to the Central Epidemic Command Center.

The CECC also urged anyone who visited one of 11 popular tourist sites during the four-day Qingming festival to avoid public spaces for 14 days, work from home if possible, wear masks and practice social distancing to avoid further cross infection.

Despite its proximity to China, where global pandemic began, Taiwan has successfully kept widespread infection at bay largely by closely tracing any possible cases, barring foreign visitors and enforcing quarantines.

The island recorded 10 new cases on Monday, bringing its total to 373 with five deaths.

VALLETTA, Malta — Maltese health authorities have placed all 1,000 migrants staying in a center in quarantine after eight of them tested positive for coronavirus.

The migrants have been granted asylum and are usually free to leave the center, and some have jobs. But Health Minister Chris Fearne ordered all of them be placed in quarantine for 14 days in a bid to contain the spread of the virus.

The Mediterranean island nation of Malta so far has 227 cases of COVID-19; the youngest is a girl aged two and the oldest is a woman of 86. Only five of the 227 have recovered.

No deaths attributed to the virus have been reported.

Maltese schools have been closed since March 13, and bars and restaurants have also been ordered shut. Maltese authorities are imposing fines on anyone who gathers in groups of more than three people in public.

LONDON — Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson remains in charge of the government despite being hospitalized in what his office described as a "precautionary step," after contracting the new coronavirus.

Housing and Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick told BBC that Johnson is awaiting the results of tests after spending the night in an undisclosed hospital.

Jenrick says that he's "sure this is very frustrating for him," but that "nonetheless he's still very much in

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charge." Jenrick did not rule out a more prolonged stay.

The 55-year-old leader had been quarantined in his Downing St. residence since being diagnosed with COVID-19 on March 26 — the first known head of government to fall ill with the virus.

He has continued to preside at daily meetings on the outbreak and has released several video messages during his 10 days in isolation.

**MOSCOW** — The number of coronavirus cases in Russia has topped 6,000 after the largest daily spike in new infections since the start of the outbreak.

The Russian government's headquarters dealing with the epidemic said Monday that 954 cases have been registered in the past 24 hours, bringing the country's total to 6,343. Moscow has accounted for 4,484 contagions.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has ordered most Russians to stay off work until the end of the month as part of a partial economic shutdown to curb the spread of the coronavirus. He said some essential industries will keep operating, and grocery stores and pharmacies will remain open.

The Russian leader has noted that that it would be up to regional authorities to decide which companies and organizations could keep working in their areas depending on the situation. Russia's Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin on Monday sternly warned regional governors against shutting administrative borders between provinces, emphasizing that movement of people and cargo mustn't be restricted.

**OSLO, Norway** — Norway is sending an emergency medical team to Italy's Lombardy region that it says is in desperate need of health-care staff due to the coronavirus emergency.

The Norwegian government said it was replying to the request of the Lombardy region initially made at the end of March.

The medical team is "self-sufficient" and will remain in Italy for four weeks, the government said.

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## US, UK brace for soaring death tolls as pandemic bears down

By **LORI HINNANT** and **DANICA KIRKA** Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — The United States and Britain braced for one of their bleakest weeks in living memory on Monday as the social and financial toll of the coronavirus pandemic deepened. New infections in Italy, Spain and France showed signs of slowing, but hundreds of patients were still dying each day.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who was infected last month, was hospitalized overnight in what his office described as a "precautionary step" after persistent symptoms. The 55-year-old Conservative leader, who had a fever for days, is the first known head of government to fall ill with the disease.

He remained at the helm of the government and was awaiting test results Monday.

"(I'm) sure this is very frustrating for him ... (but) nonetheless he's still very much in charge," Housing and Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick told the BBC. Still, Jenrick did not rule out a longer hospitalization.

World shares rose after some hard-hit European areas saw glimmers of hope — deaths and new infections appeared to be slowing in Spain, Italy and France. Leaders cautioned, however, that any gains could easily be reversed if people did not continue to adhere to strict social distancing measures and national lockdowns. Benchmarks were up about 3% in Paris and Frankfurt and Tokyo jumped more than 4%.

In Washington, U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams offered a stark warning about the surge of coronavirus deaths the nation is facing.

"This is going to be our Pearl Harbor moment, our 9/11 moment," he told "Fox News Sunday."

More than 9,600 people have died of the virus in the United States, and it leads the world in confirmed infections at more than 337,000.

In New York City, the U.S. epicenter of the pandemic, daily confirmed deaths dropped slightly, along with

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intensive care admissions and the number of patients who needed breathing tubes. But New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo warned it was "too early to tell" whether the good news would hold.

U.S. President Donald Trump later suggested the hard weeks ahead could foretell the turning of a corner. "We're starting to see light at the end of the tunnel," Trump claimed at a White House briefing.

Louisiana health officials reported 68 more coronavirus-related deaths, the state's biggest jump since the outbreak began. In all, the state where New Orleans hosts millions of tourists yearly has 477 reported deaths and over 13,000 infections.

Italy still has, by far, the world's highest coronavirus death toll — almost 16,000 — but the pressure on northern Italy's intensive care units has eased so much that Lombardy is no longer airlifting patients out to other regions.

Yet elderly Italians like Enrico Giacomoni were still dying alone even after being put on a ventilator. His family had to rely on a single daily update from a busy doctor.

"He wasn't expecting this," said his son, Roberto. "He was there hoping things would get better, and all I could do was tell him, 'Papa, be strong. You'll see, this will pass.'"

"But his eyes were sad, in the sense that he obviously knew," he added.

In Spain, deaths and new infections dropped again Monday. The country's health ministry reported 637 new deaths, the lowest fatality toll in 13 days, for a total of over 13,000 dead since the pandemic hit. New recorded infections were also the lowest in two weeks.

"The growth rate of the pandemic is decreasing in almost all regions," Health Ministry official María José Sierra said.

Yet Britain's outbreak was headed in the opposite direction as the country reported more than 600 deaths Sunday, surpassing Italy's daily increase for the second day in a row.

In a rare televised address, Queen Elizabeth II appealed to Britons to rise to the occasion, while acknowledging enormous disruptions, grief and financial difficulties they are facing. In the midst of the speech Sunday night, Johnson was admitted to the hospital.

"I hope in the years to come, everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge," the 93-year-old monarch said. "And those who come after us will say that the Britons of this generation were as strong as any."

Lacking enough for protective gear against the virus, British doctors and nurses were using goggles from school science classes, holding their breath when close to patients and repeatedly reusing single-use masks, Dr. Rinesh Parmar, head of Doctors' Association UK, told Sky News.

Worldwide, more than 1.2 million people have been confirmed infected and nearly 70,000 have died, according to Johns Hopkins University. The true numbers are certainly much higher, due to limited testing, different ways nations count the dead and deliberate under-reporting by some governments.

The virus is spread by microscopic droplets from coughs or sneezes. For most people, the virus causes mild to moderate symptoms such as fever and cough. But for some, especially older adults and the infirm, it can cause pneumonia and death. Over 263,000 people have recovered worldwide.

There is no known treatment, but some drugs have shown promise and patients are rushing to join studies.

Illness has been compounded by shocking economic pain as all the world's largest economies have ground to a halt, with 10 million jobs lost in the United States in the last two weeks alone.

Two weeks ago, Sergio Chavira, a 33-year-old truck driver in New Mexico, was advertising on Craigslist for other drivers to help him haul crude oil. Now he hasn't driven his truck for a week.

"Everything is slowing down," Chavira said. "They give us less loads to haul every day."

In Asia, Japanese officials were considered declaring a state of emergency, possibly on Tuesday. Infections are soaring in the country that has the world's third-largest economy and its oldest population.

The disease emerged in China late last year, and every week seems to bring an unwelcome surprise to those trying to fight it. A tiger at the Bronx Zoo has tested positive in what is believed to be the first known infection in an animal in the U.S. or a tiger anywhere.

The zoo's director, Jim Breheny, said he hoped the finding can contribute to the global fight against the



virus.

"Any kind of knowledge that we get on how it's transmitted, how different species react to it, that knowledge somehow is going to provide a greater base resource for people," he said.

Hinnant reported from Paris. Associated Press writers around the world contributed to this report.

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <http://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Japan PM to declare state of emergency as early as Tuesday

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said that he will declare a state of emergency for Tokyo and six other prefectures as early as Tuesday to bolster measures to fight the coronavirus outbreak, but that there will be no hard lockdowns.

Abe also told reporters Monday that his government will launch a 108 trillion yen (\$1 trillion) stimulus package to help counter the economic impact of the pandemic, including cash payouts to households in need and financial support to protect businesses and jobs.

Abe said experts on a government-commissioned task force urged him to prepare to declare a state of emergency, with the COVID-19 outbreak rapidly expanding in major cities including Tokyo, and hospitals and medical staff overburdened with patients. He said the state of emergency will cover Tokyo, Osaka, Fukuoka and four other hard-hit prefectures, and will be in effect for about a month.

The prime minister said he will hold a news conference on Tuesday to explain the state of emergency. He said the measure is intended to further reinforce social distancing between people to slow the spread of the outbreak, and to continue to keep social and economic activities to a minimum.

Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike said the city will start transferring patients with no or slight symptoms from hospitals to hotels and other accommodations to make room for an influx of patients with severe symptoms.

Japan's health ministry has confirmed 3,654 cases of the coronavirus, including 84 deaths, as well as another 712 infections and 11 fatalities on a cruise ship that was quarantined in the port of Yokohama near Tokyo earlier this year.

## Lives Lost: A man loved by many, a death at 80 alone in Rome

By MARIA GRAZIA MURRU Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Nothing in the way Enrico Giacomoni lived during his 80-plus years in Rome corresponded to the way he died: alone.

He was a good person, Giacomoni's son says, a man who took his responsibilities seriously but didn't let the pressures of life make him unkind. He built a construction business that supported his sister's family and his own. He hired 10 people when he had enough clients.

In retirement, he found delight as his grandchildren's attentive "nonno," chatting with neighbors and shopkeepers during grocery runs and cooking with his wife. Then came the fever and stomach bug that led to trouble breathing and a call for an ambulance.

He got dressed and to the door of his apartment with the help of his son, who tried to accompany him. The paramedics in protective suits stopped the son — an escort and hospital visits were prohibited in case his father had the virus. He died 13 days later.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is part of an ongoing series of stories remembering people around the world who have died during the new coronavirus pandemic.

Enrico Giacomoni was born the year Italy entered World War II. The worldwide pandemic that has drawn

comparisons to the struggles of the war has claimed more lives in Italy than any other country.

Italy reached that sad benchmark the same week as Giacomoni's ambulance ride, positive test result, and March 16 placement in intensive care.

His wife and son were ordered to quarantine at home after confirmation of his infection. They were nearing the end of the two weeks when he died on March 29.

The day after his father's death, Roberto Giaomoni, 50, sat at the desk where his papa used to play computer chess and do crossword puzzles. While he worked to get the body of his father to a crematorium, his mother, Giulia, wept nearby. The couple had been married 55 years.

Enrico Giacomoni had been a steadfast provider, but money always was tight. He loved the sea, one of Italy's riches, and took his family on excursions when he could. Buying their top floor, two-bedroom apartment in a working-class neighborhood in 1987 took sacrifices.

Retirement came with a lung cancer diagnosis, but he had survived for a decade after surgery. Then the coronavirus hit.

For the first few days after being hospitalized, the family could still see him and chat over video calls. But once he was put on a ventilator, the family had to rely on a single daily update from a busy doctor. The last call came at 1:20 a.m. on March 29.

Roberto Giacomoni is tormented by how his father went through the ordeal by himself. His mind often flicks back to the night his father was taken.

"Don't worry, Papa, I'll come tomorrow with your suitcase," Roberto Giacomoni recalled telling his father. "You'll be OK. I'll see you tomorrow."

Should he have known he was saying goodbye? It's a question he might struggle to answer until his children, ages 8 and 3, have reason to mourn for their father.

"He wasn't expecting this," Roberto Giacomoni said. "He was there hoping things would get better, and all I could do was tell him, 'Papa, be strong. You'll see, this will pass and will just become a memory.'"

"But his eyes were sad, in the sense that he obviously knew," he added.

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Associated Press writer Nicole Winfield contributed.

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This story has been corrected to show date of death was March 29, not March 30, and to make spelling of surname consistent throughout to Giacomoni not Giancomoni.

## With worst to come, 3 in 4 hospitals already facing COVID-19

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Three out of four U.S. hospitals surveyed are already treating patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, according to a federal report that finds hospitals expect to be overwhelmed as cases rocket toward their projected peak.

A report due out Monday from a federal watchdog agency warns that different, widely reported problems are feeding off each other in a vicious cycle. Such problems include insufficient tests, slow results, scarcity of protective gear, the shortage of breathing machines for seriously ill patients and burned-out staffs anxious for their own safety.

"There's this sort of domino effect," said Ann Maxwell, an assistant inspector general at the Department of Health and Human Services. "These challenges play off each other and exacerbate the situation. There's a cascade effect."

The inspector general's report is based on a telephone survey of 323 hospitals around the country, from March 23-27. With hundreds of new coronavirus cases daily, the situation is becoming more dire for many of the nation's 6,000 hospitals. Others can still scramble to prepare. A copy of the report was provided to The Associated Press.

"Hospitals reported that their most significant challenges centered on testing and caring for patients with known or suspected COVID-19, and keeping staff safe," the report concluded.

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"It's likely that every hospital in America is going to have to deal with this," Maxwell said.

In most people, the coronavirus causes mild to moderate symptoms. Others, particularly older people and those with underlying health issues, can develop life-threatening breathing problems. The U.S. has more diagnosed cases in the global pandemic than any other country, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University. Projections show the nation will see the peak impact later this month.

Maxwell said the goal of the report was to describe the predicament hospitals are facing. She said the key insight is that different problems — usually addressed individually — are building on each other to entangle the whole system.

For example, a lack of testing and slow results means hospitals must keep patients with unconfirmed coronavirus disease longer.

That takes up precious beds and uses up protective equipment like gowns, masks and face shields, since doctors and nurses have to assume that patients with symptoms of respiratory distress may be positive.

The increased workload raises the stress level for nurses, doctors and respiratory therapists, who are also concerned they may be unable to properly protect themselves.

"Health care workers feel like they're at war right now," a hospital administrator in New York City told the inspector general's investigators. They "are seeing people in their 30s, 40s, 50s dying. ... This takes a large emotional toll." The inspector general's office did not identify survey respondents due to privacy concerns.

Overtime hours and increased use of supplies are raising costs at the same time that many hospitals experience a revenue crunch because elective surgeries have been canceled. The recently passed federal stimulus bill pumps money to hospitals.

"It is in fact a national challenge, not just from the hot spots, but from all over the country," Maxwell said. Rural hospitals are vulnerable because of a limited number of beds and smaller staffs.

Of the 323 hospitals in the survey, 117 reported they were treating one or more patients with confirmed COVID-19, while 130 said they were treating one or more patients suspected to have the disease. Suspected infections are treated similarly, because of the uncertainties around testing. Only 32 hospitals said they were not treating any patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. Another 44 hospitals did not provide that information.

"Hospitals anticipated being overwhelmed by a surge in COVID-19 patients, who would need specialty beds and isolation areas for effective treatment," the report said.

Parts of Europe provide a glimpse of what hospitals here are trying to avoid. The AP reported last week that some European nations are throwing together makeshift hospitals and shipping coronavirus patients out of overwhelmed cities via high-speed trains and military jets. In Spain, doctors are having to make agonizing decisions about who gets the best care. In the U.S., two Navy hospital ships have been deployed and field hospitals erected.

How to set priorities for the use of ventilators, breathing machines that can sustain life, is one of the most worrisome questions. Hospitals from Louisiana to New York and Michigan are already confronting projected shortages, the AP reported last week.

"Government needs to provide guidelines on ethics if health resources are limited and decisions need to be made about which patients to treat," a hospital official in Broward County, Florida, told the inspector general's office. "Are physicians liable for their decisions if that happens?"

Many hospitals are responding by improvising their own solutions. Some explored buying face masks from nail salons due to the shortage of personal protective equipment, or PPE. Others have been trying to make their own hand sanitizer by blending ultrasound gel with alcohol from local distilleries.

Ingenuity can create its own worries.

"We are throwing all of our PPE best practices out the window," a hospital administrator in West Texas told the inspector general's office. "That one will come back and bite us."

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Associated Press researcher Jennifer Farrar contributed to this report.

## South Africa's TB, HIV history prepares it for virus testing

By ANDREW MELDRUM Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) —

South Africa, one of the world's most unequal countries with a large population vulnerable to the new coronavirus, may have an advantage in the outbreak, honed during years battling HIV and tuberculosis: the know-how and infrastructure to conduct mass testing.

Health experts stress that the best way to slow the spread of the virus is through extensive testing, the quick quarantine of people who are positive, and tracking who those people came into contact with.

"We have a simple message for all countries: test, test, test," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organization and a former Ethiopian health minister, said recently.

South Africa has begun doing just that with mobile testing units and screening centers established in the country's most densely populated township areas, where an estimated 25% of the country's 57 million people live.

Clad in protective gear, medical workers operate a mobile testing unit in Johannesburg's poor Yeoville area. In the windswept dunes of Cape Town's Khayelitsha township, centers have been erected where residents are screened and those deemed at risk are tested.

While most people who become infected have mild or moderate symptoms, the disease can be particularly dangerous for older people and those with existing health problems, such as those whose immune systems are weakened or who have lung issues. That means many in South Africa — with world's largest number of people with HIV, more than 8 million, and one of the world's highest levels of TB, which affects the lungs — are at high risk of getting more severe cases of the disease.

"Social distancing is almost impossible when a large family lives in a one-room shack. Frequent hand-washing is not practical when a hundred families share one tap," said Denis Chopera, executive manager of the Sub-Saharan African Network for TB/HIV Research Excellence.

"These are areas where there are high concentrations of people with HIV and TB who are at risk for severe symptoms. These are areas that can quickly become hot spots," said Chopera, a virologist based in Durban.

But years of fighting those scourges has endowed South Africa with a network of testing sites and laboratories in diverse communities across the country that may help it cope, say experts.

"We have testing infrastructure, testing history and expertise that is unprecedented in the world," said Francois Venter, deputy director of the Reproductive Health Institute at the University of Witwatersrand. "It is an opportunity that we cannot afford to squander."

The country imposed a three-week lockdown March 27 that bought it some time, said Venter.

"Now is the time to test and track. We must get out into the community and find out where the hot spots are," said the doctor. "With testing we can strategically focus our resources."

South Africa was one of only two countries in Africa that could test for the new coronavirus when it began its global spread in January. Now at least 43 of the continent's 54 countries can, but many have limited capacity.

Widespread testing has even been a challenge in North America and Europe, where some countries with large outbreaks resorted to only testing patients who are hospitalized.

Currently able to conduct 5,000 tests per day, South Africa will increase its capacity to more than 30,000 per day by the end of the April, according to the National Health Laboratory Service.

That would make its capacity among the best in Africa and comparable to many countries in the developed world, say health experts.

At first in South Africa, COVID-19 appeared to be a disease of the rich, as the first few hundred cases were virtually all people who had traveled to Italy and France and who could afford to go to private clinics.

But as local transmission of the virus takes hold, the public health service must take testing into the country's most vulnerable areas: the overcrowded, under-resourced townships.

South Africa has thousands of community health workers experienced in reaching out in these areas to



educate about infectious diseases as well as to screen, test and track contacts to try to contain the spread.

South Africa is already testing by taking swabs and using conventional means.

And it is also expecting to receive new kits that will allow rapid test results. South Africa has for several years been using a TB testing system that extracts genetic material and produces results within two hours. That system, known as GeneXpert, has developed a test for COVID-19 that was approved last month by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and South Africa is expecting delivery of those test kits within weeks.

"This will dramatically shorten our testing time, and the smaller machines can be placed in mobile vehicles, which are ideal for community testing," said Dr. Kamy Chetty, CEO of the National Health Laboratory Service.

South African Health Minister Zweli Mkhize said the country must find out "what is happening in our densely populated areas, in particular the townships" where he said health workers would "continue to venture forth in full combat by proactively conducting wall-to-wall testing and find all COVID-19 affected people in the country."

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <http://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## After virus, how will Americans' view of the world change?

By TED ANTHONY AP National Writer

As the coronavirus spread across the world and began its reach into the United States, an assortment of Americans from the president on down summoned one notion as they framed the emerging cataclysm.

"The Chinese virus," they called it — or, in a few particularly racist cases, the "kung flu." No matter the terminology of choice, the message was clear: Whatever the ravages of COVID-19 are causing, it's somewhere else's fault.

Not someone. Somewhere.

A thick thread of the American experience has always been to hold the rest of the world at arm's length, whether in economics, technology or cultural exchange. The truth is, this nation has always been a bit of an island, a place where multilingualism, or even holding a passport, is less common than in many other lands.

Now, the notion of a virus that came from a distant "elsewhere" stands to carve deeper grooves into that landscape.

"It's a continuation of the same kinds of fears that we have had," says Jennifer Sciubba, an international studies professor at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee. "We've seen this conversation before."

As the outbreak worsens by the day, the United States, like other nations, is drawing quite literally inward. With little ability to plan and increasing numbers of Americans out of work, that's a natural reaction. "The coronavirus is killing globalization as we know it," one foreign-affairs journal said.

It's unlikely that much of the globalization that touches Americans daily — the parts in their iPhones, the cheap consumer goods, the out-of-season fruit in their produce aisles, the ability to communicate around the world virtually — is going anywhere, at least for good.

But a protracted period of coronavirus anxiety and impact will almost certainly redraw — and in many cases reinforce — opinions about the wider world's role in American lives.

Throughout its 244-year existence, America's relationship with the rest of the world has been marked by the tension between working together with other nations, or going it alone as a land of "rugged individualists."

Isolationism was, in fact, a dominant American policy until the 20th century — except when it wasn't, like when those millions of immigrants arrived from Germany, Ireland, Italy, Eastern Europe and other somewhere elses to become American.

Geography played a role in early isolationist attitudes. Insulated by oceans, the United States bordered only two nations, which often meant no regular exposure to people who were different. What's more,

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many communities, particularly on the frontier, had to be insular to survive — even as they desperately needed goods from “civilization” back East.

The most obvious motivation, however, is economic, in the form of a perceived loss of opportunities.

Since the Industrial Revolution’s beginnings in the 19th century, chunks of the population have exhibited wariness of outsiders willing to work for less and take jobs from longer-term Americans. That has proven fertile ground for populist politicians to exploit.

Finally, of course, there’s fear — of an unknown other, the kind that allows a word like “globalism” to evolve into a sinister, sometimes anti-Semitic epithet. “It’s a human condition to fear the unknown. So people clump it all into ‘danger’ or ‘stay away,’” says Jeffrey Martinson, a political scientist at Meredith College in Raleigh, North Carolina.

The important thing to remember, advocates of engagement say, is this: Since World War II in particular, Americans have benefited from the fruits of engagement as much as they’ve suffered from its detriments.

“The pandemic has shown that illness and other aspects of life now can’t be stopped by borders,” says Scott Wilson, a political scientist at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, who helps lead the institution’s global initiatives.

“It has shown the importance of integration in terms of the response,” Wilson says. “Without global institutions and global cooperation, we would be in much worse shape. ... We can’t turn that back.”

So what happens next? Presuming American society emerges from the spring (and summer?) of coronavirus largely intact, where does its global-engagement discussion go?

Jonathan Cristol, a research fellow at Adelphi University’s Levermore Global Scholars Program in New York, predicts that the coronavirus will “provide ammunition for all sides.”

“People ... opposed to globalization and free trade will use the spread of the pathogen as an argument for why we need to roll back globalization. That will be framed in terms of immigration, in terms of anti-Chinese sentiment,” he says. “And the people who favor interconnectedness will use the working together toward a common purpose as a way to back up their argument.”

One side effect of the virus era may actually stimulate globalization. Stripped of their ability to travel or meet in person, humans have doubled down on virtual communication more fundamentally than ever. That means the person two doors down presents in the same way as the one two continents away — as a pixelated image on a screen.

“I could see the shift to online work actually encouraging links around the world,” says Stephen L.S. Smith, an economist at Hope College in Michigan who focuses on global trade. “It could end with a deeper globalization, but one that was more cognizant with security risks.”

That’s the question in a post-virus United States, a more distilled version of its pre-COVID counterpart: How to shape the American place in the world to benefit as many as possible without compromising the control and sovereignty so valued by many in a land that sometimes considers itself an exception to global rules?

“If the pandemic teaches us nothing else, it shows that we are all in this together. We are all vulnerable to forces like this,” says Betty Cruz, president and CEO of the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh, which fosters international engagement.

“Insularity isn’t something that we can afford. Period,” Cruz says. “The entire nation can’t afford to not be globally connected. So it’s not how do we get back to normal, but how do we create a new normal with connections that are deeper than before?”

Ted Anthony, director of digital innovation for The Associated Press, has been writing about global affairs since 1995. Follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/anthonyted>.

## From Iran's hot zone, Afghans flee home, spreading virus

By TAMEEM AKHGAR Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — Mahdi Noori, a young Afghan refugee in Iran, was left jobless when the factory where he'd worked cutting stone was shut down because of the coronavirus outbreak. He had no money, was afraid of contracting the virus and had no options. So he headed home.

He joined a large migration of some 200,000 Afghans and counting who have been flowing home across the border for weeks — from a country that is one of the world's biggest epicenters of the pandemic to an impoverished homeland that is woefully unprepared to deal with it.

At the border, Noori lined up with thousands of other returning refugees earlier this month, crowded together waiting to cross. "I saw women and children on the border, and I was thinking, What if they get infected now, here?" the 20-year-old told The Associated Press.

The massive influx of returnees, who are going back untested and unmonitored to cities, towns and villages around the country, threatens to create a greater outbreak in Afghanistan that could overwhelm its health infrastructure wrecked by decades of war. So far, Afghan authorities have confirmed 273 cases of the new coronavirus, more than 210 of them in people who returned from Iran. Four deaths have been recorded.

Afghan Health Minister Ferozudin Feroz says the virus has already spread because of the returnees. "If the cases increase, then it will be out of control and we will need help," he said.

He and other Afghan officials expressed concern that Iran would push out the more than 1 million Afghans working illegally in the country. Iran has already barred entry from Afghanistan, preventing any who left from coming back. Iran has had more than 58,000 coronavirus cases and more than 3,600 deaths.

So far, the International Organization of Migration has recorded more than 198,000 Afghans returnees from Iran this year, more than 145,000 of them in March as the outbreak in Iran accelerated. At the height of the influx, 15,000 people a day were crossing the border, according to Repatriation and Returnees Minister Sayed Hussain Alimi Balkhi, though it has gone down slightly since.

At the border, the IOM gives tents and blankets to returnees who have nowhere to go and transportation money to others. But the Afghan government and independent agencies don't have the capacity to test, take temperatures or quarantine the returnees. Almost all go back to their home provinces using public transportation, around a quarter of them to Herat province, bordering Iran.

Noori's experience mirrors that of many other returnees.

He quit school to go work in Iran when he was 15, bouncing between multiple jobs, most recently cutting stone in a construction materials factory in the central Iranian city of Isfahan. He earned enough to send \$180 a month back to his impoverished family of eight.

When the factory shut, he lost his income. He feared that, if infected, he would get no treatment because Afghans are far down in priority. He tried to get tested in Iran but was refused, he said.

He traveled back with other workers, not knowing if any of them were infected. Once in Afghanistan, he took buses across almost the entire breadth of the country to reach the capital, Kabul.

On the buses, he was met with hostility from other Afghans who told him, "Fear of coronavirus brought you home to kill others with it," he said.

He reached his home in Kabul on March 17 and isolated himself for two weeks from his family, fearing he could infect them. "I experienced the worst moment of my life, meeting my parents, sisters and brothers from a distance after such a long time," he said, speaking by phone from his home.

The government ordered a lockdown on March 28 in Kabul and Herat province, shutting down businesses, restaurants and wedding halls, just as the traditional spring season for weddings was beginning.

But the response has been hobbled by a government crisis that has seen two candidates claiming to have won recent presidential elections and by continued violence.

On Monday, neighboring Pakistan said it would reopen its border for four days so that Afghans wishing to return home can go back. On the other side of the border, which closed nearly a month ago, the Afghan government has set up a quarantine camp for the returnees.

Pakistani nationals stranded in Afghanistan will also be allowed to go back. According to the IOM, 1,827 undocumented Afghan refugees had returned from Pakistan between Jan. 1 and mid-March.

Habibullah Zafari, who had been studying in Iran, returned to Kabul four weeks ago. The next day, he went to the testing center in the capital, where they didn't test him but instead took his temperature and checked for symptoms. They declared him negative.

Nevertheless, Zafari quarantined himself until just a few days ago, when he finally met with friends and family. He still wears a mask and gloves and stays at home most of the time.

"This virus is like the wind," he said. "You do not know where it comes from and how you get infected."

Associated Press writer Munir Ahmed in Islamabad contributed to this report.

## Patients rush to join studies testing drug for coronavirus

By **MARILYNN MARCHIONE AP Chief Medical Writer**

The new coronavirus made Dr. Jag Singh a patient at his own hospital. His alarm grew as he saw an X-ray of his pneumonia-choked lungs and colleagues asked his wishes about life support while wheeling him into Massachusetts General's intensive care unit.

When they offered him a chance to help test remdesivir, an experimental drug that's shown promise against some other coronaviruses, "it did not even cross my mind once to say 'no,'" said Singh, a heart specialist.

Coronavirus patients around the world have been rushing to join remdesivir studies that opened in hospitals in the last few weeks.

Interest has been so great that the U.S. National Institutes of Health is expanding its study, which has nearly reached its initial goal of 440 patients. The drug's maker, California-based Gilead Sciences, is quickly ramping up its own studies, too.

"I would enroll my family in a heartbeat" if the need arose, said Dr. Libby Hohmann, who placed Singh and nearly 30 others in the NIH one at Mass General. To have no approved medicines for COVID-19 now is "kind of terrifying," she said.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, which can include fever and cough but sometimes pneumonia requiring hospitalization. The risk of death is greater for older adults and people with other health problems.

Remdesivir is given through an IV. It's designed to interfere with an enzyme that reproduces viral genetic material.

In animal tests against SARS and MERS, diseases caused by similar coronaviruses, the drug helped prevent infection and reduced the severity of symptoms when given early enough in the course of illness. It's farther along in testing than many other potential therapies and the current studies could lead to regulatory approval.

Gilead has given remdesivir to more than 1,700 patients on a case-by-case emergency basis, but more people ultimately will be helped if the company does the needed studies to prove safety and effectiveness, chief executive Dan O'Day wrote in a recent letter to the public.

"Many people have reached out to Gilead to advocate for access to remdesivir on behalf of friends and loved ones. I can only imagine how it must feel to be in that situation," he wrote. "We are taking the ethical, responsible approach."

In another letter on Saturday, O'Day said the company has 1.5 million doses, which could mean more than 140,000 treatment courses, depending on how long treatment needs to last. The company is providing the drug for free for now and has set a goal of making 500,000 treatment courses by October and more than a million by the end of the year.

Gilead supplied remdesivir for two studies in China expected to give results by the end of the month. It also launched two studies for hospitalized patients in the U.S., Asia, Europe and elsewhere. One in severely ill patients tests five versus 10 days of treatment. Another in moderately sick patients compares those two



options to standard care alone.

"There's so much anxiety about the disease that the patients are quite interested" and no one offered the chance has refused, said Dr. Arun Sanyal, the study leader at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond.

The first patient he enrolled was a previously healthy middle-aged man who had an out-of-state visitor a few days before his symptoms began. What started as mild illness escalated to profound shortness of breath requiring supplemental oxygen.

At University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center, Dr. Grace McComsey has enrolled roughly half a dozen patients.

"We're seeing more and more younger people, like 30, really sick," she said.

The NIH study is the most rigorous test. It compares remdesivir to placebo infusions, and neither patients nor doctors know who is getting what until the end of the study. Besides the U.S., it's open in Japan, Korea and Singapore.

In Chicago, an 89-year-old man was Northwestern Memorial Hospital's first participant and "the family was very excited" to have him included, said infectious diseases chief Dr. Babafemi Taiwo.

At the University of California, Irvine, Dr. Alpesh Amin has enrolled several patients. All are getting standard care even if they wind up getting a placebo rather than remdesivir, Amin said.

The Boston cardiologist, Singh, said he was willing to take that chance to advance science even if he personally winds up not benefiting. He's now recovering at home after spending a week in the hospital.

"The word 'placebo' freaks some people out," but rigorous testing is needed to avoid giving false hope or using something unsafe. Still, it's tough to face patients with no proven therapy now, Hohmann said.

"The worst thing is seeing some really young people who are really, really sick," such as a 49-year-old man with three young children on life support, she said. "That's pretty awful."

Marilynn Marchione can be followed on Twitter: @MMarchioneAP

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## Governors plead for food stamp flexibility amid pandemic

By **ASTRID GALVAN** and **ASHRAF KHALIL** Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Yvonne Knight, who has respiratory problems that make her especially vulnerable in the coronavirus pandemic, can't buy groceries online with her food stamps — even though each trip to the store is now a risky endeavor.

Going out to buy food terrifies the 38-year-old woman with cerebral palsy, but she is one of millions of people who receive food aid through the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program that can't be used in flexible ways.

"Every time I go out, I put myself at risk — and other people," said Knight, who lives in Erie, Pennsylvania. "I'm so terrified when people come up to me now. I don't want to go out to the store."

Buying groceries online — which many Americans are doing to drastically reduce how often they leave their homes — is only open to SNAP recipients in six U.S. states, and Pennsylvania is not one of them.

Now, state governments and food security activists across the country are imploring the U.S. Department of Agriculture to make the program more flexible and easier to access at a time when so many people are losing their jobs and turning to the government for support.

The calls have even come from conservative states where lawmakers have tried to reduce or limit food aid.

In Arizona, Republican Gov. Doug Ducey has asked the agency to waive interview requirements for applicants, allow families to purchase hot meals, waive work requirements for some and enact other changes that would help families deal with the economic fallout of the pandemic.

Ashley St. Thomas, the public policy manager for the Arizona Food Bank Network, lauded the governor's

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request, adding that relaxing requirements that program recipients prove they are working at least some hours each month is "critical right now" — especially as millions get laid off and jobs dry up for people who work in the informal or gig economies.

Amanda Siebe, a 35-year-old who lives in Hillsboro, Oregon, suffers from a chronic pain condition and has a compromised immune system, so she tries to avoid leaving the house.

But she struggles to stretch her SNAP benefit — \$194 a month — in normal times, and she would love to have more cash now to be able to buy larger food quantities to limit grocery trips.

"We need food that will not only last the whole month but give us a little bit to stock up so we can get ahead without having to worry what's gonna happen in the future," Siebe said. "Especially because the majority of us cannot leave the house very often."

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and can lead to death — meaning those people need to take special precautions.

The increased need for food aid and calls to make it more flexible come directly on the heels of a stalled Trump administration attempt to purge an estimated 700,000 people from SNAP rolls. The changes would have taken away states' ability to waive a rule that able-bodied adults without dependents show a certain number of hours worked per month. A court blocked the changes, and the USDA vowed to appeal.

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue now says he's undecided and notes that the congressional virus relief package contains a blanket waiver on the work requirement — though the agency seems likely to revisit the issue in calmer times.

For now, with large parts of the economy shuttered, state governments are clamoring to expand the recipient ranks and cut the red tape.

In Pennsylvania, where Knight lives, Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf on Thursday asked the agency to waive several requirements. He urged the federal government to expand a pilot program launched in New York and Washington state that allows people to use their debit-style benefit cards to order online groceries. Amazon and Walmart now accept SNAP payments online in Iowa, Nebraska, Oregon, Washington and New York, where ShopRite also accepts the payments. In Alabama, Wright's Markets, Inc. accepts the online payments.

In Missouri, the state's social services department requested and was granted waivers to extend SNAP certifications by six months so that people won't be kicked out of the program during the pandemic.

Food security advocates recommend the government go further, giving states blanket latitude to adjust their programs.

That would allow states to expand their beneficiary ranks with minimal paperwork, said Ellen Vollinger, legal director for the Food Research and Action Center.

"One can imagine a set of waivers that are so common that every state would benefit," she said.

Among the specific changes she recommends: eliminating the personal interview that precedes a recipient's entry into the program — as Arizona's governor requested — and allowing a recipient's status in the program to automatically renew without paperwork.

The built-in flexibility of the program has proved vital in natural disasters that devastated individual cities or regions — and activists argue that SNAP benefits could be one of the core instruments used to help Americans endure a pandemic hitting the whole country at once.

"The benefits turn over quickly in the economy. They get spent," Vollinger said.

Khalil reported from Washington. Associated Press journalists Summer Ballentine in Columbia, Missouri; Sophia Tareen in Chicago; Brian Witte in Annapolis, Maryland; Melinda Deslatte in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Gary Robertson in Raleigh, North Carolina; Patrick Whittle in Portland, Maine; John Hanna in Topeka, Kansas; Becky Bohrer in Juneau, Alaska; and Jim Anderson in Denver contributed to this report.

## **FACT CHECK: Trump pitches drug not approved for coronavirus**

**By HOPE YEN, ERIC TUCKER and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is pitching a medicine for COVID-19 sufferers that science has not concluded is effective or safe for their use. “Take it,” he said of the drug.

For people sick with the coronavirus, he said Sunday, “It can help them but it’s not going to hurt them.” In fact, it may or may not help some people, and it may or may not hurt them.

His straight-ahead advocacy of hydroxychloroquine, a malaria drug, is the latest and one of the most consequential examples of Trump and public-health authorities not being on the same page in the pandemic.

His statement came during a weekend when he also misrepresented the facts behind his firing of the intelligence community’s inspector general whose handling of a whistleblower complaint led to impeachment proceedings. Over the previous days, he’d spread a number of distortions on the pandemic.

A look at his recent remarks:

### **MALARIA DRUG**

TRUMP, on the government’s decision to stockpile millions of doses of hydroxychloroquine drug to make it available for patients with COVID-19: “What do you have to lose? I’ll say it again: What do you have to lose? Take it. I really think they should take it. But it’s their choice and it’s their doctor’s choice, or the doctors in the hospital. But hydroxychloroquine — try it, if you’d like.” — news briefing Saturday.

TRUMP: “They say taking it before the fact is good. ... I’m not acting as a doctor. I’m saying do what you want. ... It can help them but it’s not going to hurt them.” — briefing Sunday night.

THE FACTS: He’s making unverified claims about a drug that can have serious side effects and may not work. The drug has not been approved as a treatment for COVID-19 and Trump’s own health experts say more studies are needed to know whether it’s safe and effective to use.

The president has been talking up hydroxychloroquine, a drug long used to treat malaria, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus, after very small preliminary studies suggested it might help prevent coronavirus from entering cells and possibly help patients clear the virus sooner. Doctors can already prescribe the malaria drug to patients with COVID-19, a practice known as off-label prescribing.

But the drug has major potential side effects, especially for the heart, and large studies are underway to see if it is safe and effective for treating coronavirus.

On Friday, Dr. Anthony Fauci of the National Institutes of Health and member of the White House coronavirus task force, said Americans shouldn’t consider hydroxychloroquine a “knockout drug.”

“We still need to do the definitive studies to determine whether any intervention, not just this one, is truly safe and effective,” he said on Fox News.

The American Medical Association, the American Pharmacists Association and the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists in a joint statement previously cautioned against “prophylactically prescribing medications currently identified as potential treatments for COVID-19.” That means prescribing a medicine for the purpose of warding off a disease or preventing its spread.

### **SPANISH FLU**

TRUMP: “The problem is when something like this comes along, which you don’t expect. Look, 1917, it’s a long time ago, perhaps 100 million people died. It’s a long time ago, so people don’t think it’s going to happen.” — briefing Sunday night.

THE FACTS: He got the year wrong for the Spanish flu and appeared to overstate deaths from it. The pandemic spread from early 1918 to late 1920. It killed an estimated 50 million or more worldwide, with about 675,000 of the deaths in the U.S., says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

### **IMPEACHMENT**

TRUMP, on firing Michael Atkinson, the intelligence community inspector general: “I thought he did a terrible job. Absolutely terrible. He took a whistleblower report, which turned out to be a fake report — it was fake. It was totally wrong.” — news briefing Saturday.

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THE FACTS: No, the whistleblower's accusations have not been shown to be wrong. Key details have been corroborated.

For example, the White House account of Trump's July 25, 2019, phone call with Ukraine's new president showed that the whistleblower had accurately summarized the conversation, as relayed by unidentified U.S. officials, in the complaint Atkinson sent to the acting director of national intelligence. Witnesses who heard the call testified to the accuracy of that account.

TRUMP, suggesting that Atkinson had claimed that the whistleblower complaint regarding Ukraine should be discounted because of political bias: "He even said it was politically biased. He actually said that." — news briefing Saturday.

THE FACTS: He actually did not say that.

Atkinson did not state that the complaint was "politically biased" or suggest that it should not be regarded seriously. To the contrary, Atkinson wrote in a letter to Joseph Maguire, then the acting director of national intelligence, that any potential bias on the whistleblower's part did not take away from his overall conclusion that the complaint was "credible." He noted that an initial review by his inspector general's office had found support for key allegations in the complaint, including that Trump had put pressure on Ukraine's leader to take action favorable to his re-election campaign.

## THE VIRUS THREAT

TRUMP, on a warning that had just been delivered by Dr. Deborah Birx of the coronavirus task force that more Americans need to heed distancing steps ordered by many states and recommended by Washington: "She wasn't referring to our country, she was referring to one state." — briefing Thursday.

THE FACTS: No, she was talking about more Americans overall needing to keep away from each other. More specifically, Birx said the outbreak would not be spreading by now in areas with low infection rates if everyone were following the guidelines. Instead, officials are now seeing cases of people who were infected after the guidelines took effect.

"This should not be happening any longer in new places if people are doing the social distancing, washing their hands, not getting together in large groups more than 10," she said at the briefing where Trump then tried to tamp down her warning out of his concern about the "headlines tomorrow."

Birx said: "We see Spain, we see Italy, we see France, we see Germany. When we see others beginning to bend their curves, we can bend ours. But it means everybody has to take that same responsibility as Americans." Bending the curve means flattening out the rate of increase in cases.

She added: "Yes. There are states that are dead flat. But, you know, every — what changes the curve is a new Detroit, a new Chicago, a new New Orleans, a new Colorado."

TRUMP: "Four weeks ago, we had the greatest economy in the history of the world. The greatest in the world — greatest in the history of the world." — briefing Thursday.

THE FACTS: Not true. The economy was healthy back then but not the best in U.S. history, much less world history.

Economic gains largely followed along the lines of an expansion that started more than a decade ago under President Barack Obama. And while posting great job and stock market numbers, Trump never managed to achieve the rates of economic growth he promised in the 2016 campaign. The U.S. economy was not the world's best in history when this started.

TRUMP, going back to that period four weeks ago: "And then, one day, I get a call from Deborah, who's fantastic, and from Dr. Fauci. And he said and she said, 'We have a problem. I said, 'What's the problem?' And they said, 'We may have to close it up.' I said, 'Close what up?' They said, 'Close up the country.' And I said, 'What's that all about?'" — briefing Thursday.

THE FACTS: You'd think that Trump was just learning about the outbreak from Birx and Dr. Anthony Fauci



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of the National Institutes of Health in the phone call. That's not the case.

Trump knew the U.S. had "a problem" well before that timeline of roughly early March.

By then the U.S. had restricted travel from abroad, experienced its first coronavirus infections and was told to expect the outbreak to spread in the country. The World Health Organization declared a global health emergency Jan. 30.

**VICE PRESIDENT MIKE PENCE:** "I don't believe the president has ever belittled the threat of the coronavirus." — CNN interview Wednesday.

**MITCH McCONNELL,** Senate majority leader: The coronavirus crisis "came up while we were tied down in the impeachment trial. And I think it diverted the attention of the government, because everything, every day was all about impeachment." — interview Tuesday with radio host Hugh Hewitt.

**THE FACTS:** While Pence claims Trump always treated the virus threat seriously, McConnell suggests Trump may not have because he was distracted by impeachment. Neither claim is credible.

Trump says he would not have done anything faster on the virus, absent impeachment. And he actually belittled the coronavirus threat repeatedly from January to mid-March, maintaining his position even after the Senate acquitted him Feb. 5 in his impeachment trial. He dismissed the threat as a small number of U.S. cases that were under "control" and would fall to zero by April.

On Feb. 10, he asserted "we're in great shape ... we have 12 cases" and told Fox Business it will be fine because "in April, supposedly, it dies with the hotter weather. And that's a beautiful date to look forward to."

"When you have 15 people, and the 15 within a couple of days is going to be down to close to zero, that's a pretty good job we've done," he said Feb. 26. A day later he said: "It's going to disappear. One day — it's like a miracle — it will disappear,"

"It's got the world aflutter, but it'll work out," Trump told the National Association of Counties on March 3. Along the way, he said Democrats who were calling on him to do more were perpetuating a hoax.

On March 9, he tweeted the 546 cases and 22 deaths experienced by then in the U.S. were no reason to take drastic steps: "Nothing is shut down, life & the economy go on."

Trump now acknowledges the U.S. could see 100,000 to 240,000 deaths from the pandemic even if current distancing guidelines are maintained. When asked Tuesday if impeachment proceedings had distracted him from the U.S. coronavirus response, he said, "I don't think I would have acted any differently or I don't think I would have acted any faster."

## SOCIAL MEDIA

**TRUMP:** "I have, you know, hundreds of millions of people. Number one on Facebook. Did you know I was number one on Facebook? I mean, I just found out I'm number one on Facebook. I thought that was very nice for whatever it means." — news briefing Wednesday.

**THE FACTS:** It doesn't mean anything because it's not true. He's nowhere close to No. 1.

Trump has 29 million followers on Facebook, far below former President Barack Obama, who has 54 million. Cristiano Ronaldo, the Portuguese soccer player, has 126 million.

## TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

**TRUMP:** "I stopped some very, very infected, very, very sick people, thousands coming in from China long earlier than anybody thought, including the experts. Nobody thought we should do it except me. And I stopped everybody. We stopped it cold." — interview March 30 with "Fox & Friends."

**PENCE:** "The president suspended all travel from China in January." — interview Wednesday with CNN.

**THE FACTS:** Trump didn't "stop cold" all the people infected with coronavirus from entering the U.S. with a ban of all travel from China. There were gaps in containment and initial delays in testing, leading to the U.S. rising to No. 1 globally in the number of people infected by COVID-19.

Nor did Trump decide on his own to impose travel restrictions on China — he followed a consensus recommendation by his public-health advisers.

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His order in late January temporarily barred entry by foreign nationals who had traveled in China within the previous 14 days, with exceptions for the immediate family of U.S. citizens and permanent residents. Americans returning from China were allowed back for two more weeks. They were given enhanced screenings. But screenings can miss people who are carrying the virus but showing no symptoms.

## MORTALITY

TRUMP: "So we have more cases than anybody, but we're doing really well, and we also have a very low — relative to other countries — very low mortality rate. And there are reasons for that." — interview March 30 with "Fox & Friends."

TRUMP: "We've been doing more test — tests than any other country anywhere in the world. It's one of the reasons that we have more cases than other countries, because we've been testing. It's also one of the reasons that we're just about the lowest in terms of mortality rate." — news briefing on March 29.

THE FACTS: His suggestion that the U.S. response is better than other countries' because its mortality rate is "just about the lowest" is unsupported and misleading.

It's too early to know the real death rate from COVID-19 in any country. Look at a count kept by Johns Hopkins University, and you can divide the number of reported cases by the number of recorded deaths. But that math provides a completely unreliable measurement of death rates, and the Johns Hopkins tally is not intended to be that.

First, the count changes every day as new infections and deaths are recorded.

More important, every country is testing differently. Knowing the real denominator, the true number of people who become infected, is key to determining what portion of them die. Some countries, the U.S. among them, have had trouble making enough tests available. When there's a shortage of tests, the sickest get tested first. And even with a good supply of tests, someone who's otherwise healthy and has mild symptoms may not be tested and thus go uncounted.

The result is a hodgepodge of numbers that get sorted out as the crisis diminishes. Indeed, initial death rates were thought to be as high as 4% in parts of China. But a report published Monday in *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* calculated that 1.38% actually is the best estimate of deaths among confirmed cases across China and that accounting for unconfirmed cases could drop that rate below 1%.

Early on Fauci estimated that the death rate in the U.S. might hit around 1%, which would be 10 times higher than mortality from a typical flu season.

Associated Press writers Darlene Superville, Luran Neergaard and Matthew Perrone in Washington, Alan Suderman in Richmond, Va., and Amanda Seitz in Chicago contributed to this report.

EDITOR'S NOTE — A look at the veracity of claims by political figures.

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## Trump tempers officials' grave assessments with optimism

By WILL WEISSERT and KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. surgeon general says that Americans should brace for levels of tragedy reminiscent of the Sept. 11 attacks and the bombing of Pearl Harbor, while the nation's infectious disease chief warned that the new coronavirus may never be completely eradicated from the globe.

Those were some of the most grim assessments yet for the immediate future and beyond. But hours later, President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence tried to strike more optimistic tones, suggesting that hard weeks ahead could mean beginning to turn a corner.

"We're starting to see light at the end of the tunnel," Trump said at a Sunday evening White House briefing. Pence added, "We are beginning to see glimmers of progress."

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The president also insisted that both assessments from his administration — they came within 12 hours of each other — didn't represent an about-face or were even "that different."

"I think we all know that we have to reach a certain point — and that point is going to be a horrific point in terms of death — but it's also a point at which things are going to start changing," Trump said. "We're getting very close to that level right now."

The president added that he thought the next two weeks "are going to be very difficult. At the same time, we understand what they represent and what that time represents and, hopefully, we can get this over with."

Still, Trump's own briefing also struck a somber tone at times. The president offered some of his most extensive comments to date to the families of those killed by the virus, urging the nation to pray for them and "ask God to comfort them in their hour of grief."

"With the faith of our families and the spirit of our people and the grace of our God we will endure," the president said. "We will overcome."

Earlier Sunday, Surgeon General Jerome Adams told CNN, "This is going to be the hardest and the saddest week of most Americans' lives, quite frankly."

"This is going to be our Pearl Harbor moment, our 9/11 moment, only it's not going to be localized," said Adams, the nation's top doctor. "It's going to be happening all over the country. And I want America to understand that."

The number of people infected in the U.S. has exceeded 337,000, with the death toll climbing past 9,600. More than 4,100 of those deaths are in the state of New York, but a glimmer of hope there came on Sunday when Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo said his state registered a small dip in new fatalities over a 24-hour period. Still, Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards said his state may run out of ventilators by week's end.

Former Vice President Joe Biden suggested his party's presidential nominating convention, already pushed from July into August because of the outbreak, may have to move fully online to avoid packing thousands of people into an arena in Milwaukee.

Biden has all but clinched his party's presidential nomination and held an online town hall from his home in Delaware at the same time Trump was addressing reporters. His tone was far less confrontational than Trump, who clashed with reporters and criticized Democratic Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker as being demanding and complaining while having "not performed well."

Biden sought to be uplifting and almost grandfatherly, taking questions from children with his wife. But he also said the president "has been awful slow" to use the powers of his office to compel private companies to make protective equipment for doctors and nurses, adding that "we should be much more aggressive."

Trump angrily deflected questions regarding the slow pace of the federal government's response to the pandemic, praising federal officials he has elevated in recent weeks to coordinate the distribution of hard-to-find supplies.

"The people that you're looking at, FEMA, the military, what they've done is a miracle," Trump told reporters. "What they've done is a miracle in getting all of this stuff. What they have done for states is incredible."

For most people, the virus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and death.

Also Sunday, Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said the toll in the coming week is "going to be shocking to some, but that's what is going to happen before it turns around, so just buckle down."

Fauci said the virus probably won't be wiped out entirely this year, and that unless the world gets it under control, it will "assume a seasonal nature."

"We need to be prepared that, since it unlikely will be completely eradicated from the planet, that as we get into next season, we may see the beginning of a resurgence," Fauci said. "That's the reason why we're pushing so hard in getting our preparedness much better than it was."

The Defense Department released new requirements that all individuals on its property "will wear cloth

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face coverings when they cannot maintain six feet of social distance in public areas or work centers." That is in compliance with new federal guidelines that Americans use face coverings when venturing out.

Trump had said previously that he's choosing not to wear a face mask and scoffed at the idea of using one while answering questions as he held news briefings like Sunday night's.

"I would wear one," he said, but only "if I thought it was important."

Associated Press writer Brian Slodysko in Washington contributed to this report.

## Chaos and scrambling in the US oil patch as prices plummet

By CATHY BUSSEWITZ AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — In Montana, a father and son running a small oil business are cutting their salaries in half. In New Mexico, an oil truck driver who supports his family just went a week without pay. And in Alaska, lawmakers have had to dip into the state's savings as oil revenue dries up.

The global economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic has devastated the oil industry in the U.S., which pumps more crude than any other country. In the first quarter, the price of U.S. crude fell harder than at any point in history, plunging 66% to around \$20 a barrel.

A generation ago, a drop in oil prices would have largely been celebrated in the U.S., translating into cheaper gas for consumers. But today, those depressed prices carry negative economic implications, particularly in states that have become dependent on oil to keep their budgets balanced and residents employed.

"It's just a nightmare down here," said Lee Levinson, owner of LPD Energy, an oil and gas producer in Tulsa, Oklahoma. "Should these low oil prices last for any substantial period of time, it's going to be hard for anyone to survive."

Crude prices recovered some ground, trading at around \$28 a barrel Friday, after a week in which President Donald Trump tweeted that he expects Saudi Arabia and Russia will end an oil war and dramatically cut production.

On Friday, he met with oil executives but there were no announcements, and prices remain well below what most U.S. producers need to stay afloat.

Among the latest casualties is Whiting Petroleum, an oil producer in the Bakken shale formation with about 500 employees that filed for bankruptcy protection Wednesday. Schlumberger, one of the largest oilfield services companies, slashed its capital spending by 30% and is expecting to cut staff and pay in North America. And Halliburton, another major oilfield services provider, furloughed 3,500 of its Houston employees, ordering workers into a one-week-on, one-week-off schedule.

"You will see a tremendous loss of jobs in this industry," said Patrick Montalban, owner of Montalban Oil and Gas, based in Montana, who along with his son is slashing his salary in half and plans to cut the his remaining employees' salaries by 25% and end their health insurance benefits.

The impact is far-reaching. In Alaska, lawmakers recently passed a budget that sharply draws down a savings account that had been built up over the years when oil prices were higher. In New Mexico, where a third of the state's revenue comes from petroleum, the governor slashed infrastructure spending and will likely cut more in a special legislative session.

In Texas, which produces about 40% of the country's oil and employs more than 361,000 people, the picture is especially bleak. Three weeks ago, Bobby Whitacre, vice president of Impala Transport in Plano, Texas, was looking to hire a well site supervisor for \$200 a day with paid time off. Now he's had to lay off many of his workers.

"It's dead. It's dead as can be," he said.

While many industries paralyzed by the coronavirus pandemic received help from a recent \$2 trillion congressional relief package, the energy sector was largely left out. The American Petroleum Institute, the oil industry's main lobbying group, has maintained its free market philosophy, saying it does not want direct financial assistance from government. But the group did ask the federal government to relax environmental rules.



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Some smaller producers would welcome financial relief.

"If the federal government is going to do something to help small businesses nationwide because of the problem with the coronavirus, we certainly don't want to be excluded from that," said Dewey Bartlett, Jr., president of Keener Oil & Gas and former Republican mayor of Tulsa.

Many oil producers big and small stopped the costly process of drilling new wells when prices plummeted, leaving all kinds of workers vulnerable to layoffs: drillers, attorneys, truckers who deliver sand or water for fracking and skilled tradesmen who make equipment for rigs, to name a few.

It was only two weeks ago when Sergio Chavira, a 33-year-old truck driver in New Mexico, was advertising on Craigslist for other drivers to help him haul crude oil, writing that there was "plenty of work."

Not anymore. The husband and father of an 8 year old and a 5 year old hasn't driven his truck for a week and is bracing for a drop in pay for what work is left.

"Now everything is slowing down," Chavira said. "They give us less loads to haul every day."

Checkers Inc., which administers drug and alcohol tests for oil industry employees in the heart of North Dakota's oil patch, has seen its monthly screenings fall by more than half, said owner Janette McCollum, who reduced her full-time employees' hours to part-time in response. Along with the slowdown in clients, "companies are not wanting to pay their bills," she said.

The oil industry was already logging hundreds of bankruptcies before the coronavirus hit, as producers struggled with weak global oil demand and high debt loads. Then the pandemic shut down travel as country after country started restricting flights in an attempt to bring the contagion under control.

World oil demand fell 7% in the first quarter, and is expected to fall 14% in the second quarter, according to IHS Markit. If that wasn't enough, OPEC and Russia couldn't agree on production cuts to prop up prices, so Saudi Arabia flooded the market with cheap oil. The kingdom slashed oil prices last month and vowed to ramp up production to more than 12 million barrels a day.

Many American shale producers feel targeted by Saudi Arabia, which they suspect of trying to put them out of business. And it could be working.

"We're just burning through money down here," said Levinson, LPD Energy's owner. "And how long we can last is anyone's guess."

AP Writers Cedar Attanasio in El Paso, Texas; James MacPherson in Bismarck, North Dakota; Sean Murphy in Oklahoma City and Becky Bohrer in Juneau, Alaska contributed to this report.

## Grocery workers are key during the virus. And they're afraid

By JIM VERTUNO Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Every day, grocery workers are restocking toilet paper, eggs, produce and canned goods as fast as the items fly off the shelves.

They disinfect keypads, freezer handles and checkout counters as hundreds of people weave around them, sometimes standing too close for comfort amid the coronavirus pandemic. Some work for hours behind clear plastic barriers installed at checkout counters, bulwarks against sudden sneezes or coughs that can propel germs.

They aren't doctors or nurses, yet they have been praised for their dedication by Pope Francis, former U.S. President Barack Obama and countless people on social media, as infections and death counts rise.

From South Africa to Italy to the U.S., grocery workers — many in low-wage jobs — are manning the frontlines amid worldwide lockdowns, their work deemed essential to keep food and critical goods flowing. Some fear falling sick or bringing the virus home to vulnerable loved ones, and frustration is mounting as some demand better workplace protections, including shorter hours to allow them to rest, and "hazard" pay for working closely with the public.

"Everyone is scared everywhere, here in South Africa and everywhere in the world," said Zandile Mlotshwa, a cashier at Spar supermarket in the Johannesburg suburb of Norwood.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, and the

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vast majority survive. But for others, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can be more severe, even causing pneumonia or death.

In the U.S., a handful of states — Minnesota and Vermont were the first — have given grocery workers a special classification that allows them to put their children in state-paid child care while they work. Unions in Colorado, Alaska, Texas and many other states are pressing governors to elevate grocery workers to the status of first responders.

“The government’s responsibility is to step up in these moments,” said Sarah Cherin, chief of staff for the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union in Seattle, the first U.S. epicenter of COVID-19.

The union, which represents about 23,000 grocery workers and 18,000 health care workers, won early concessions for higher pay.

“We have always been a group of people who come to work when others stay home,” Cherin said. “Our workers need the same protection others get.”

U.S. grocery and food delivery workers are insisting employers pay them more and provide masks, gloves, gowns and access to testing. Whole Foods workers called for a recent “sickout” to demand better conditions, including double pay. A group of independent contractors for the Instacart grocery delivery service walked out to force more protections.

Some of the biggest employers in the U.S. are responding.

Kroger, the nation’s largest grocery chain, said it will give all hourly employees a \$2-an-hour “Hero Bonus” through April 18. That follows temporary \$2 pay bumps by Walmart, Target and others.

Walmart’s raise is just for hourly employees in distribution centers, but it’s also giving bonuses to full- and part-time workers. Walmart, the nation’s largest private employer, and Target will provide masks and gloves to front-line workers and limit the number of customers in stores. Walmart is taking the temperatures of its nearly 1.5 million employees when they report to work.

“Most will see it as a welcome relief,” Walmart spokesman Dan Bartlett said of the new measures.

But that doesn’t alleviate the fear when shoppers won’t follow the rules, including social distancing.

Jake Pinelli, who works at a ShopRite in Aberdeen, New Jersey, said customers don’t stay 6 feet (2 meters) away from others and typically don’t wear masks or gloves. Staffers have protective gear, but the younger employees often give it to older co-workers or those they know have health conditions.

“Most of us are terrified,” Pinelli said. But he stays on because he wants to help.

“I have not only bills to pay, but it’s the only way right now I feel like I can do anything for my community and help out,” Pinelli said.

Some have fallen sick.

The Shaw’s supermarket chain told workers last week at six stores in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont that one of its employees had been diagnosed with COVID-19. The company reminded workers to wash their hands regularly and stay home if they don’t feel well.

At the Organic Food Depot in Norfolk, Virginia, cash is no longer used. Customers can’t bring reusable bags. Children under 16 are banned.

“If somebody fell sick in the store, the store is most likely going to shut down,” manager Jamie Gass said.

Gass, 47, said his wife has asthma, which means she would be more vulnerable to the coronavirus. Yet he feels pride going to a job that helps ensure people get fed in a crisis.

“Am I scared that I could catch this? Absolutely,” Gass said. “But I’m sure everybody is in that position. I’m just taking as many precautions as I can, so I don’t have to worry as much.”

In Italy, where more than 14,000 people have died of COVID-19, consumers seem to prefer smaller, family-run stores and markets.

One of them, the Innocenzi grocery store in Rome, was established in 1884 by Emanuela Innocenzi’s grandfather. Its wooden shelves, marble entrance steps and cherished custom of clerks waiting on each customer harken back to another era. The small store now allows in only two customers at a time.

A dentist’s office provided masks, which employees wipe down with alcohol each day and reuse.

Emanuela Innocenzi shrugged off the pope’s praise.

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"The doctors, the nurses have special training," she said. "This is our work."

Associated Press writers Ben Finley in Norfolk, Virginia; Michael Casey in Boston; Alexandra Olson and Anne D'Innocenzio in New York; Frances Demilio in Rome; Andrew Meldrum in Johannesburg; and video journalist Rodrique Ngowi in Quincy, Massachusetts, contributed to this report.

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Desperate hunt for food by Peru's poor amid virus quarantine

By FRANKLIN BRICENO Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — Pushing a shopping cart with two children, César Alegre emerges from the large, deteriorated house near Peru's presidential palace that is shared by 45 families to search for food. Sometimes he begs in markets. Sometimes he sells candies.

It is a task that was hard at the best of times, but with a month-long quarantine that has forced 32 million Peruvians to stay home and closed restaurants and food kitchens, it has become much harder.

"We eat once or twice a day," said the 52-year-old, who says he has spent time in six different prisons for theft. Many among the 100 or so residents of the three-story house are ex-convicts who can't find work. The old building is opposite Lima's San Lazaro church, which was founded in 1650 as a hospital for refugees from a leprosy outbreak.

Alegre and his children, accompanied by a handful of neighbors, normally start out by walking about 2 miles (3 kilometers) to a market where they ask for food. The merchants give them potatoes, meat bones and overripe fruit that nobody wants to buy.

But these days the merchants are refusing to give them as much food, if any at all, because their sales have fallen amid the pandemic and strict measures that have kept people at home and shuttered the restaurants that would buy their goods.

"They're vagrants," said a meat vendor of the inhabitants of Alegre's building, which has earned the nickname "Luriganchito," or "Little Luriganchito," after Peru's most-populous prison, for the number of ex-convicts who reside there. The vendor said two weeks ago a young man from the building stole a bag of fish.

Besides begging in markets, Alegre also sells candy on buses. Nowadays, passengers wear face masks and don't like strangers coming near them.

"The virus has highlighted the selfishness that man carries inside," he said.

The pandemic has spotlighted the wide gap between rich and poor in Peru and elsewhere in Latin America, and economists say a looming recession worse than any since World War II could push the continent's long-suffering poor into even more dire circumstances.

"The economic impact of what is happening is unprecedented," said Peru's economy minister, María Alva.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

As of Sunday night, Peru had 2,281 confirmed coronavirus cases, with 83 deaths. The government has steadily tightened bans and lock-downs to slow the spread of the virus. This past week it ordered that only men can leave the house on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, while only women can go out on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The trips can only be to the market, pharmacy or bank.

To try to address the humanitarian disaster, Peru has begun distributing about \$400 million to feed 12 million poor people for one month.

But the money doesn't seem to be reaching most of the families in Alegre's sprawling shared house. The building in Lima's Rimac district is a relic from the area's historic era and still has balconies from its better days. But inside its now-cracked walls is a warren of narrow, dark passageways that smell of damp clothing and marijuana. Children run through them barefoot as cockroaches scatter to avoid being crushed.

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Its residents have stories of hard luck and tough living.

Santos Escobar, a 68-year-old former mug seller, ended up living in "Luriganchito" after his house burned down twice. In the first fire, two of his six daughters died. In the second, both his legs were burned.

Nélida Rojas, 59, had a stroke two years ago that partially paralyzed her. She now uses crutches and begs for alms.

Nilú Asca is a 24-year-old single mother with two daughters. The youngest is 2 and has some type of hip dislocation or problem that forces her to wear a plaster cast.

Eating with his children in their small room, Alegre watches the news on an old television set. He believes what is preventing looting is the deployment of 140,000 uniformed officers to guard food markets and banks.

But his long-term outlook is not optimistic.

"There are a lot of desperate people. They could rise up if they don't get help," said Alegre.

## Americans brace for 'hardest, saddest' week of their lives

By JIM MUSTIAN and FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Americans braced for what the nation's top doctor warned Sunday would be "the hardest and saddest week" of their lives while Britain assumed the unwelcome mantle of deadliest coronavirus hot spot in Europe after a record 24-hour jump in deaths that surpassed even hard-hit Italy's.

Britain's own prime minister, Boris Johnson, was hospitalized, 10 days after testing positive for COVID-19 in what his office described as a "precautionary step."

Amid the dire news, there were also glimmers of hope some hard-hit areas — the number of people dying appeared to be slowing in New York City, Spain and Italy. The news was cautiously welcomed by leaders, who also noted that any gains could easily be reversed if people did not continue to adhere to strict lockdowns.

U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams offered a stark warning about the expected wave of virus deaths.

"This is going to be our Pearl Harbor moment, our 9/11 moment," he told "Fox News Sunday."

But President Donald Trump later suggested the hard weeks ahead could foretell the turning of a corner. "We're starting to see light at the end of the tunnel," Trump said at an evening White House briefing.

In New York City, the U.S. epicenter of the pandemic, daily deaths dropped slightly, along with intensive care admissions and the number of patients who needed breathing tubes inserted, but New York state Gov. Andrew Cuomo warned it was "too early to tell" the significance of those numbers.

Italy and Spain also got some encouraging news. Italy registered its lowest day-to-day increase in deaths in more than two weeks — 525, said Angelo Borrelli, the head of the national Civil Protection agency. The pace of infection also seemed to be slowing.

Even so, Borrelli warned, "This good news shouldn't make us drop our guard."

Confirmed infections fell in Spain, too, and new deaths declined for the third straight day, dropping to 674 — the first time daily deaths have fallen below 800 in the past week.

The outlook, however, was bleak in Britain, which reported more than 600 deaths Sunday, surpassing Italy's increase. Italy still has, by far, the world's highest coronavirus death toll — almost 16,000.

In a rare televised address, Queen Elizabeth II appealed to Britons to rise to the occasion, while acknowledging enormous disruptions, grief and financial difficulties.

"I hope in the years to come, everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge," she said. "And those who come after us will say that the Britons of this generation were as strong as any."

Johnson, meanwhile, has been hospitalized, though his office said it was not an emergency and that the 55-year-old Conservative will undergo tests.

There are concerns that Johnson's government did not take the virus seriously enough at first and that spring weather will tempt Britons and others to break social distancing rules.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the U.K. might even ban outdoor exercise if people still "flout the rules."

"The vast majority of people are following the public health advice, which is absolutely critical, and stay-



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ing at home," Hancock told Sky TV. "But there are a small minority of people who are still not doing that — it's quite unbelievable, frankly, to see that."

As the numbers of infections rose, Saffron Cordery, the deputy head of Britain's National Health Service Providers, said the agency needed to focus on quickly increasing ventilator capacity and getting more protective equipment for health care workers.

Italians have not been immune to lure of the good weather, either. Top Italian officials took to national television after photos were published showing huge crowds out shopping.

Health Minister Roberto Speranza told RAI state television that all the sacrifices Italians have made since the nationwide lockdown began risked being reversed.

Restrictions on movement vary from country to country, state to state, locality to locality. Swedes have been advised to practice social distancing, but schools, bars and restaurants remain open. In Germany and Britain, residents can get outdoors to exercise and walk their dogs, while in Serbia and South Africa, dog walking is not allowed.

The ACLU filed its first lawsuit over coronavirus restrictions, arguing in part that Puerto Rico's curfew leaves people fearing arrest if they help elderly relatives by letting police determine who belongs in a family. A coastal community's mayor in Georgia fears the governor's mandate to open beaches will bring crowds to the small island with older residents and no medical facility.

At the Vatican, Pope Francis blessed palms for Palm Sunday in a near-empty St. Peter's Basilica. At a New Orleans church, Rev. Emmanuel Mulenga blessed palm fronds and put them on a back table so people could get them while also observing social distancing.

Worldwide, more than 1.2 million people have been confirmed infected and nearly 70,000 have died, according to Johns Hopkins University. The true numbers are certainly much higher, due to limited testing, different ways nations count the dead and deliberate under-reporting by some governments.

The vast majority of infected people recover from the virus, which is spread by microscopic droplets from coughs or sneezes. For most people, the virus causes mild to moderate symptoms such as fever and cough. But for some, especially older adults and the infirm, it can cause pneumonia and lead to death.

The rapid spread of the virus in the United States has prompted a chaotic scramble for medical equipment and protective gear.

An Associated Press review of purchasing contracts showed that federal agencies largely waited until mid-March — more than two months after the first warnings of a potential pandemic — to begin placing bulk orders of N95 respirator masks, mechanical ventilators and other equipment needed by front-line health care workers.

By that time, hospitals in several states were treating thousands of infected patients without adequate equipment and pleading for shipments from the national stockpile. Now that stockpile is nearly drained just as the numbers of patients requiring critical care is surging.

When asked about the issue, Trump said federal officials and the military had worked "a miracle."

Rebekah Gee, who heads the Louisiana State University's health care services division, warned that the private and public sector have been competing with each other, leading to price increases.

Gee said one of her colleagues went on eBay to buy gowns, while equipment her department ordered from China got stalled for weeks in Hong Kong.

"Our whole country is at war with this virus," said Gee, who once ran the state's Department of Health. "This needs a coordinated approach, and right now that's not happening."

Louisiana and the New Orleans area have been hard hit by the virus, and Gov. John Bel Edwards has repeatedly warned of looming equipment shortages.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said he hoped the pace of new infections would plateau soon, but that the virus is unlikely to be eradicated this year.

Speaking on CBS's "Face the Nation," Fauci said the prospect of a resurgence is why the U.S. is working so hard to develop a vaccine and conducting clinical trials on treatments.

Scientists are still learning about the virus that was first detected in late December in Wuhan, China. In what is believed to be the first known infection in an animal in the U.S., officials said Sunday that a tiger

at the Bronx Zoo had tested positive.

D'Emilio reported from Rome. Associated Press writers around the world contributed to this report.

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <http://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## **AP FACT CHECK: Trump pitches drug unapproved for coronavirus**

**By HOPE YEN, CALVIN WOODWARD and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is pitching a medicine for COVID-19 sufferers that science has not concluded is effective or safe for their use. "Take it," he said of the drug.

For people sick with the coronavirus, he said Sunday, "It can help them but it's not going to hurt them." In fact, it may or may not help some people, and it may or may not hurt them.

His straight-ahead advocacy of hydroxychloroquine, a malaria drug, is the latest and one of the most consequential examples of Trump and public-health authorities not being on the same page in the pandemic.

His statement came on a weekend when Trump also misrepresented the facts behind his firing of the intelligence community's inspector general whose handling of a whistleblower complaint led to impeachment proceedings against the president.

A look at his weekend remarks:

### **CORONAVIRUS**

TRUMP, on the government's decision to stockpile millions of doses of hydroxychloroquine drug to make it available for patients with COVID-19: "What do you have to lose? I'll say it again: What do you have to lose? Take it. I really think they should take it. But it's their choice and it's their doctor's choice, or the doctors in the hospital. But hydroxychloroquine — try it, if you'd like." — news briefing Saturday.

TRUMP: "They say taking it before the fact is good. ... I'm not acting as a doctor. I'm saying do what you want. ... It can help them but it's not going to hurt them." — briefing Sunday night.

THE FACTS: He's making unverified claims about a drug that can have serious side effects and may not work. The drug has not been approved as a treatment for COVID-19 and Trump's own health experts say more studies are needed to know whether it's safe and effective to use.

The president has been talking up hydroxychloroquine, a drug long used to treat malaria, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus, after very small preliminary studies suggested it might help prevent coronavirus from entering cells and possibly help patients clear the virus sooner. Doctors can already prescribe the malaria drug to patients with COVID-19, a practice known as off-label prescribing.

But the drug has major potential side effects, especially for the heart, and large studies are underway to see if it is safe and effective for treating coronavirus.

On Friday, Dr. Anthony Fauci of the National Institutes of Health and member of the White House coronavirus task force, said Americans shouldn't consider hydroxychloroquine a "knockout drug."

"We still need to do the definitive studies to determine whether any intervention, not just this one, is truly safe and effective," he said on Fox News.

The American Medical Association, the American Pharmacists Association and the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists in a joint statement previously cautioned against "prophylactically prescribing medications currently identified as potential treatments for COVID-19." That means prescribing a medicine for the purpose of warding off a disease or preventing its spread.

TRUMP: "The problem is when something like this comes along, which you don't expect. Look, 1917, it's a long time ago, perhaps 100 million people died. It's a long time ago, so people don't think it's going to happen." — briefing Sunday night.

THE FACTS: He got the year wrong for the Spanish flu and appeared to overstate deaths from it. The pandemic spread from early 1918 to late 1920. It killed an estimated 50 million or more worldwide, with

about 675,000 of the deaths in the U.S., says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## IMPEACHMENT

TRUMP, on firing Michael Atkinson, the intelligence community inspector general: "I thought he did a terrible job. Absolutely terrible. He took a whistleblower report, which turned out to be a fake report — it was fake. It was totally wrong." — news briefing Saturday.

THE FACTS: No, the whistleblower's accusations have not been shown to be wrong. Key details have been corroborated.

For example, the White House account of Trump's July 25, 2019, phone call with Ukraine's new president showed that the whistleblower had accurately summarized the conversation, as relayed by unidentified U.S. officials, in the complaint Atkinson sent to the acting director of national intelligence. Witnesses who heard the call testified to the accuracy of that account.

TRUMP, suggesting that Atkinson had claimed that the whistleblower complaint regarding Ukraine should be discounted because of political bias: "He even said it was politically biased. He actually said that." — news briefing Saturday.

THE FACTS: He actually did not say that.

Atkinson did not state that the complaint was "politically biased" or suggest that it should not be regarded seriously. To the contrary, Atkinson wrote in a letter to Joseph Maguire, then the acting director of national intelligence, that any potential bias on the whistleblower's part did not take away from his overall conclusion that the complaint was "credible." He noted that an initial review by his inspector general's office had found support for key allegations in the complaint, including that Trump had put pressure on Ukraine's leader to take action favorable to his reelection campaign.

Associated Press writer Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

EDITOR'S NOTE — A look at the veracity of claims by political figures.

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## UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson hospitalized with virus

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was admitted to a hospital Sunday for tests, his office said, because he is still suffering symptoms, 10 days after he was diagnosed with COVID-19.

Johnson's office said the admission to an undisclosed London hospital came on the advice of his doctor and was not an emergency. The prime minister's Downing St. office said it was a "precautionary step" and Johnson remains in charge of the government.

Johnson, 55, has been quarantined in his Downing St. residence since being diagnosed with COVID-19 on March 26 — the first known head of government to fall ill with the virus.

Johnson has continued to preside at daily meetings on Britain's response to the outbreak and has released several video messages during his 10 days in isolation.

In a message Friday, a flushed and red-eyed Johnson said he said he was feeling better but still had a fever.

The virus causes mild to moderate symptoms in most people, but for some, especially older adults and the infirm, it can cause pneumonia and lead to death.

U.S. President Donald Trump offered encouragement to Johnson as he opened a White House briefing on the pandemic Sunday. "All Americans are praying for him," Trump said.

Johnson has received medical advice remotely during his illness, but going to a hospital means doctors

can see him in person.

Dr. Rupert Beale, a group leader of the cell biology of infection lab at the Francis Crick Institute for biomedical studies, said doctors would likely "be monitoring important vital signs such as oxygen saturations," as well as performing blood tests, assessing Johnson's organ function and possibly performing a CT scan on his chest to assess his lungs.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, who has been designated to take over if Johnson becomes incapacitated, is set to lead the government's coronavirus meeting Monday.

Johnson's fiancée, Carrie Symonds, 32, revealed Saturday that she spent a week in bed with coronavirus symptoms, though she wasn't tested. Symonds, who is pregnant, said she was now "on the mend." She has not been staying with the prime minister in Downing St. since his diagnosis.

The government said Sunday that almost 48,000 people have been confirmed to have COVID-19 in the U.K., and 4,934 have died.

Johnson replaced Theresa May as Conservative prime minister in July and won a resounding election victory in December on a promise to complete Britain's exit from the European Union. But Brexit, which became official Jan. 31, has been overshadowed by the coronavirus pandemic sweeping the globe.

Johnson's government was slower than those in some European countries to impose restrictions on daily life in response to the pandemic, leading his critics to accuse him of complacency. He imposed an effective nationwide lockdown March 23, but his government remains under huge pressure to boost the country's number of hospital beds and ventilators and to expand testing for the virus.

London has been the center of the outbreak in the U.K., and politicians and civil servants have been hit hard. Several other members of Johnson's government have also tested positive for the virus, including Health Secretary Matt Hancock and junior Health Minister Nadine Dorries. Both have recovered.

News of Johnson's admission to hospital came an hour after Queen Elizabeth II made a rare televised address to the nation, in which she urged Britons to remain "united and resolute" in the fight against the virus.

"We will succeed — and that success will belong to every one of us," the 93-year-old monarch said, drawing parallels to the struggle of World War II.

"We should take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return: we will be with our friends again; we will be with our families again; we will meet again," she said.

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Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <http://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Island mayor battles Georgia governor over virus limitations

By RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

SAVANNAH, Ga. (AP) — A small coastal city in Georgia that thrives on tourism closed its beach, fearing carefree crowds of teenagers and college students posed too great a risk for spreading the new coronavirus. Two weeks later, the state's governor has reversed that decision, saying people weathering the outbreak need fresh air and exercise.

The clash has thrust tiny Tybee Island, east of Savannah, into a thorny debate that keeps cropping up during the coronavirus pandemic: How much can officials curtail freedoms during the crisis? And should those calls be made at the federal, state or local level?

Tybee Island Mayor Shirley Sessions, sworn in barely three months ago, has taken on Gov. Brian Kemp after state officials on Friday reopened the beach in this community of 3,100 people. The beach typically operates with city-funded lifeguards, police patrols and trash cleanup.

The change resulted from the Republican governor's order that people statewide should "shelter in place" — that is, they should stay home unless working jobs deemed essential, seeking medical care, shopping for groceries, or other exceptions including exercising outdoors. It also invalidated any restrictions already imposed by local governments if they went beyond the governor's limits.



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That meant a unanimous decision by Tybee Island's city council to close its beach was suddenly overridden, and Sessions said the governor's office declined to reconsider when asked. Her blunt, public rebuttal to what she called the governor's "reckless mandate" drew attention far beyond her small coastal home.

"As the Pentagon ordered 100,000 body bags to store the corpses of Americans killed by the coronavirus, Governor Brian Kemp dictated that Georgia beaches must reopen," Sessions said in a statement posted Saturday on the city's website that was quickly spread on social media and quoted in news stories. Tybee Island mayors are elected in nonpartisan races, and Sessions doesn't identify as Democrat or Republican.

Kemp noted Sunday on Twitter that state law enforcement officers were monitoring beaches at Tybee Island and elsewhere to ensure crowds weren't gathering, and that beach traffic appeared sparse. Kemp said "beach gear and parties are prohibited."

"Patrols are vigilant so people can get fresh air and exercise while following social distancing rules," the governor tweeted.

The back-and-forth reflects the broader debate in the U.S. about whether severe limitations on people's movement are necessary, causing unacceptable disruption or even constitutional. Some faith leaders, for instance, have argued that bans on gatherings that applied to services violated religious freedom protections. The American Civil Liberties Union is asking a court to block part of Puerto Rico's strict curfew, expressing concern about overreach. The Los Angeles County sheriff reversed his decision to shut down firearms dealers after he was sued by gun-rights groups.

On Sunday, there were no lifeguards were on duty on Tybee's beaches, and local officials left in place plywood signs blocking boardwalks and wooden barricades to keep cars out of beachfront parking lots.

"I would say we're going to leave them up until somebody takes them down," Sessions said in a phone interview.

The mayor said she doesn't understand why the state would assert control during the pandemic.

Kemp's office did not immediately respond to an email Sunday seeking further comment on the governor's rationale. Kemp's spokeswoman, Candice Broce, said in a statement Saturday that governor's staff was in contact with Sessions and would provide resources as needed to enforce social distancing.

Sessions said she thinks few people ventured to the beach over the weekend because they weren't sure whether it was open or closed. She's concerned that could change. The city moved to shut down the beach after thousands of young people swarmed to the sand and surf as schools and colleges canceled classes.

Local officials worried that carefree crowds posed too great a risk for spreading the virus. Still, it was a painful decision for a city that's typically hungry for spring tourists after the economically lean winter.

"We are a very high-risk community. We have an older population and two nursing homes. We don't have a medical facility," Sessions said. "The sooner we take these actions, the sooner we'll be able to get back to some type of normalcy."

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness and lead to death.

On Sunday, the Georgia Department of Public Health reported more than 6,600 confirmed infections statewide and 211 deaths. Chatham County, which includes Tybee Island and neighboring Savannah, had more than 80 cases and three deaths.

At least one Tybee Island resident is among those infected, Sessions said, as is an officer on the community's small police force.

Kemp's order that reopened the beach also lifted a temporary ban Tybee Island had imposed on people checking into vacation rental homes. Sessions said she spotted license plates from New York, New Jersey and other states reeling from the pandemic as she walked the island over the weekend.

And she fears many more visitors will show up for the upcoming Easter weekend.

"I tell people it's such a small sacrifice," said Sessions, who's still urging people to stay off the beach. "The beach is going to be there in two months. But will we be there to enjoy it?"

## Trump uses coronavirus crisis to push his broader agenda

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is taking an old political adage to heart: Never let a crisis go to waste.

The coronavirus is projected to kill more than 100,000 Americans. It has effectively shuttered the economy, torpedoed the stock market and rewritten the rules of what used to be called normal life.

But in this moment of upheaval, Trump and his advisers haven't lost sight of the opportunity to advance his agenda.

A look at some of the president's notable moves:

### BRINGING BACK THE ENTERTAINMENT TAX DEDUCTION

Trump has called on Congress to revive the tax deduction for business-related expenses on meals and entertainment, arguing it would help bolster high-end restaurants hammered by the outbreak.

Trump's own tax law in 2017 sliced the tax rate for corporations from 35% to 21% and eliminated the deduction.

"This is a great time to bring it back," Trump said of the resurrecting the tax break. "Otherwise a lot of these restaurants are going to have a hard time reopening," he said at White House briefing Wednesday.

During a Rose Garden briefing last Sunday, Trump said he had spoken with celebrity chef Wolfgang Puck about the idea. Trump also name-checked prominent restaurateurs including Thomas Keller, Daniel Boulud, and Jean-Georges Vongerichten as he tried to make the case for reviving the deduction. Vongerichten is a tenant at the president's Trump International Hotel and Tower in New York.

"Congress must pass the old, and very strongly proven, deductibility by businesses on restaurants and entertainment," Trump tweeted recently. "This will bring restaurants, and everything related, back - and stronger than ever. Move quickly, they will all be saved!"

### USING VIRUS TO MAKE CASE FOR TIGHTER BORDERS

Trump has repeatedly credited himself with moving in late January to bar entry from foreigners who had recently been in China.

The president later also ordered the temporary suspension of travel from much of Europe to the United States, and has largely closed the U.S. borders with Canada and Mexico.

But Trump has notably used the crisis to remind Americans about his 2016 campaign promise to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. He argues a wall would help contain the coronavirus. In a tweet last month, he said the structure is "Going up fast" and "We need the Wall more than ever!"

Leading public health experts disagree. Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, told lawmakers last month that he was unaware of any indication from his agency that physical barriers along America's borders would help halt the spread of the coronavirus in the U.S.

Still, Trump argues that the virus has only spotlighted that his instincts on the border wall were right.

The virus — and the subsequent opportunity to invoke emergency powers — has allowed Trump to lock down the borders and make sure virtually no immigrants are getting in.

### PANDEMIC UNDERSCORES NEED FOR PROTECTIONISM, TRUMP SAYS

Trump in recent days has grumbled that American companies such as 3M and GM are not doing enough to provide American medical workers and first responders with vital equipment they need.

But the president and his aides have also made a broader argument about the need for the country to retool regulations to encourage the manufacturing of medicine and other key safety equipment on American soil.

Peter Navarro, a senior trade adviser to Trump, said the pandemic, which has left hospitals short of ventilators and protective masks, has underscored the president's "buy American, secure borders, and a strong manufacturing base" philosophy.

"Never again should we have to depend on the rest of the world for our essential medicines and coun-

termeasures," Navarro said.

## ADMINISTRATION ROLLS BACK MILEAGE STANDARDS

On the same day that the White House announced projections that 100,000 to 240,000 Americans are likely to die from coronavirus, the Environmental Protection Agency introduced a controversial new federal rule that will relax mileage standards for years to come.

The rollback is a victory for Americans who like their SUVs and pickup trucks, but it's hardly without a cost. The government's own projections indicate that the new standards also mean more Americans will die from air pollution, and there will be more climate-damaging tailpipe exhaust and more expense for drivers at the gas pumps.

Trump hailed the new rule as reason for Americans to go out and buy big, new cars.

"Great news! American families will now be able to buy safer, more affordable, and environmentally friendly cars with our new SAFE VEHICLES RULE," Trump tweeted.

Democratic lawmakers and environmental groups condemned the rollback, and years of legal battles are expected, including from California and other states opposed to the change.

## KEEPING AN EYE ON OVERHAULING COURTS

Trump announced Friday he was nominating a young, federal judge to fill a high-profile vacancy on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Judge Justin Walker, 37, was confirmed less than six months ago for a seat on the U.S. District Court in Western Kentucky after a contentious nominating fight about his credentials.

The former clerk to retired Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy is one of the youngest federal judges in the country. He also has deep ties to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Kentucky Republican who hailed the nomination as an opportunity to "refresh the second-most-important federal court in the country." Walker also clerked for Justice Brett Kavanaugh when Kavanaugh was a judge on the D.C. appeals court.

Walker drew a rare "Not Qualified" rating from the American Bar Association when Trump nominated him last year to be a federal judge. Despite reservations from Democrats and the legal community about Walker's credentials, his nomination was approved, 50—41. Opponents noted he was barely 10 years out of law school and had never served as co-counsel at trial when he was tapped for the federal bench.

The Trump administration has worked feverishly to overhaul the federal courts, nominating and winning Senate confirmation for more than 190 judges over the past three years, a pace unseen since Ronald Reagan was in the White House.

Even in the midst of battling a pandemic, Trump hasn't lost sight of the long-term impact his nominations to the federal bench will have on his legacy.

This story has been corrected to reflect that the property in New York is the Trump International Hotel and Tower, not the Trump Tower.

## States lack key data on virus cases among medical workers

By MARTHA BELLISLE Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Experts and health officials who are trying to plan a response to the coronavirus outbreak are missing a critical piece of information — the number of health care workers who have tested positive for the disease.

Washington state faced the first major outbreak of COVID-19 in the nation, but health officials have not kept track of how many doctors and nurses have the disease. New York, the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak, also lacks infection figures for medical staff, according to Jill Montag, spokeswoman with the New York State Department of Health.

That information can help save lives, said Dr. Grete Porteous, an anesthesiologist in Seattle who has

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worked on health care emergency preparedness and crisis management. It previously helped reduce risks to medical personnel during the much smaller SARS outbreak of 2003-04, she said.

With the medical profession facing shortages of basic protective gear, "the question should be asked: are there ways that we can improve what we do to make care safer for everyone?" Porteous said. "Without regional and national public health data on COVID-19 infections in health care personnel, it is difficult to envision how to start answering this question."

During the SARS outbreak, Porteous said, data about "an alarmingly high rate of infection and death" in medical staff led to improved rules around infection protocol and use of personal protective equipment.

Ruth Schubert, spokeswoman for the Washington Nurses Association, said that same data are needed for COVID-19.

"We are urging the (Department of Health) and the emergency operations team at the state level to begin collecting and reporting this information," she said.

Experts who create models for how the coronavirus will impact the country's health care system say they also want the data to better determine how severely hospitals will be impacted.

While health officials count ICU beds and calculate hospital capacity to plan for a surge in cases, Christopher Murray, director of the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington, has created a model for predicting COVID-19 deaths. It also predicts the number of hospital beds, ICU beds and ventilators each state will need.

Murray is also trying to include things like how many workers are needed to care for patients. But without access to the number of infected health care workers, he's unable to make that determination.

Murray hopes that will change.

"That's a really important piece of information to know," he said. "I'll add that to the data that we'll ask for from governments."

As of Saturday, Washington state had more than 7,500 cases and New York had counted more than 110,000. Neither state knows how many of those cases are health care workers.

Ohio, on the other hand, reported at least 16% of its cases involved health care workers, while in Minnesota, it was 28% on Wednesday.

Other countries are reporting COVID-19's impact on their health care community. Spain has said at least 12,298 health care workers have tested positive for the disease – 14.4% of the total reported cases. More than 60 doctors have died in Italy.

Johns Hopkins University's online map tracking the spread of the virus doesn't include a subset of data on how many health care workers have become sick. The platform wasn't built to collect data on workers, said university spokesman Douglas Donovan. CDC charts also don't break it out.

The Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security has recommended hospitals keep a log of staff with COVID-19. Those who have recovered could work on units devoted to COVID-19. But data on infected staff may not be available because hospitals want to protect that information, fearing it may appear they have unsafe conditions, said Dr. Angela Gardner, an emergency physician and professor at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

Having data on how many health care workers are sick would help with planning, she said.

Hospitals also need better parameters for how long a worker should stay away from patients if exposed to COVID-19, she said. CDC recommendations say a doctor or nurse can return three days after they are asymptomatic. But if a worker was exposed and didn't have symptoms or even tested negative, they're required to be quarantined 14 days.

Although the Washington state health department isn't collecting the data, some counties are. At least 88 health care workers in Snohomish County have tested positive for the coronavirus, out of 1,300 total cases. In Yakima County, it's more like 30%.

However, officials in King County, home to the highest concentration of cases, don't know how many health care workers have the disease.

University of Washington Medicine began testing employees with symptoms on March 5, said spokes-



woman Susan Gregg.

"Since that time, we have tested approximately 1,304 UW Medicine health care workers in our drive-through clinics," she said. About 95.6% tested negative and 4.4 percent tested positive, she said. Many have already recovered.

Colorado health officials also want to find out who's infected by implementing a testing program for all health care workers, said Micki Trost, a spokesperson for the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

"This testing strategy helps strengthen our medical capacity," she said.

## **Amid coronavirus pandemic, black mistrust of medicine looms**

**By AARON MORRISON and JAY REEVES Associated Press**

NEW YORK (AP) — Just as the new coronavirus was declared a global pandemic, gym members in New York City frantically called the fitness center where Rahmell Peebles worked, asking him to freeze their memberships.

Peebles, a 30-year-old black man who's skeptical of what he hears from the news media and government, initially didn't see the need for alarm over the virus.

"I felt it was a complete hoax," Peebles said. "This thing happens every two or four years. We have an outbreak of a disease that seems to put everybody in a panic."

Peebles is among roughly 40 million black Americans deciding minute by minute whether to put their faith in government and the medical community during the coronavirus pandemic. Historic failures in government responses to disasters and emergencies, medical abuse, neglect and exploitation have jaded generations of black people into a distrust of public institutions.

"I've just been conditioned not to trust," said Peebles, who is now obeying the state's stay home order and keeping his distance from others when he goes out.

Some call such skepticism the "Tuskegee effect" — distrust linked to the U.S. government's once-secret study of black men in Alabama who were left untreated for syphilis. Black people already suffer disproportionately from chronic conditions like diabetes and heart disease and are far more likely to be uninsured.

How the government and medical community responds to the crisis will be especially crucial for outcomes among black Americans, civil rights advocates and medical experts say.

"We are right to be paranoid and to ask tough questions," said U.S. Rep. Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts who joined other congressional leaders in asking the government to collect and release information about the race and ethnicity of people who are tested or treated for the virus that causes COVID-19.

"History has shown us, when we do not" ask questions, said Pressley, who is black, "the consequences are grave, and in fact life and death."

NAACP President Derrick Johnson, who hosted a coronavirus tele-town hall with U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams last month, said black and brown communities need reliable information about the crisis.

"Now that this has been deemed a pandemic, I am most concerned with inequities in who's provided tests, who's provided treatment and how those tests and the treatments are administered, in a way that is open, transparent, and equitable," Johnson said.

For most people, the virus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. But for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

Cities with large black populations like New York, Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee and New Orleans have emerged as hot spots for the coronavirus. Figures released by Michigan's Department of Health and Human Services show 40% of those who have died from COVID-19 are black in a state where African-Americans are just 14% of the population.

And many Southern states with large black populations have been slow to mandate statewide restrictions shown to slow virus spread.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, black adults are 60% more likely than

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non-Hispanic white adults to be diagnosed with diabetes, 40% more likely to have high blood pressure and are less likely to have those conditions under control. Additionally, in 2015, black women were 20% more likely to have asthma than non-Hispanic whites.

Those disparities make the availability of a treatment or vaccine urgent, even as the virus is currently projected to claim tens of thousands of lives. But given history, Peebles said he wouldn't rush to accept a remedy.

"If we got to a place where the government says, 'OK, now it's time to take a vaccine,' then I'm definitely going to be skeptical of their intentions," he said.

Launched in 1932 by the U.S. Public Health Service, the Tuskegee study involved roughly 600 poor black men in Alabama who weren't treated for the sexually transmitted disease so researchers could track its progress. The program was exposed and ended in 1972, and then-President Bill Clinton formally apologized in 1997.

The Tuskegee legacy has helped pollute the black community's relationship with American medical science. A 2016 paper found the fallout included mistrust of medicine among black men, along with fewer interactions with doctors and higher mortality rates.

In Tuskegee, where many families include descendants of victims, many residents don't trust government health information, said Lucenia Dunn, a former Tuskegee mayor. So volunteers trying to get the word out about coronavirus have gone door-to-door distributing fliers with cartoon-like illustrations that don't look "too official," she said.

"We have a general distrust in this community," Dunn said. "I call it 'subconscious rejection.' The attitude is, 'I'm going to rebel against this. You people have been telling us lies for years. Why should I believe you now?'"

In Los Angeles, Jahmil Lacey helped found a public health group for black men and boys, TRAPMedicine, that educates black barbers and organizes workshops to address health disparities among their customers.

"People will quote the Tuskegee experiment as the reason why black people don't trust health care, but there's so much more than just that one example," Lacey said. "We don't trust systems that are connected to white supremacy. So, we have to do the work to repair it."

Indeed, Tuskegee didn't happen in a vacuum. In the 1950s, doctors at the John Hopkins Hospital used cervical cancer cells from Henrietta Lacks, a black mother of five, to pioneer medical advances and research that continue globally today. Lacks, who died in 1951, never gave her consent and her family has never been compensated.

One way to begin healing the mistrust is to increase black representation in the medical field, said Dr. Nicollette Louissaint, executive director of the Washington-based emergency response advocacy group Healthcare Ready.

"We have to make sure that ... the message itself and the messengers are being adapted to the appropriate audience," said Louissaint, who is black. "It's going to be really important that we get that right."

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Reeves reported from Birmingham, Alabama. Both are members of the AP's Race and Ethnicity team. Follow Morrison on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/aaronlmorrison>. Follow Reeves on Twitter at [https://twitter.com/Jay\\_Reeves](https://twitter.com/Jay_Reeves)

## Palm Sunday services held without public; some on rooftops

By FRANCES D'EMILIO Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis celebrated Palm Sunday Mass in the shelter of St. Peter's Basilica without the public because of the coronavirus pandemic, while parish priests elsewhere in Rome took to church rooftops and bell towers to lead services so at least some faithful could follow the familiar ritual.

Looking pensive and sounding subdued, Francis led the first of several solemn Holy Week ceremonies that will shut out rank-and-file faithful from attending, as Italy's rigid lockdown measures forbid public gatherings.

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Normally, tens of thousands of Romans, tourists and pilgrims, clutching olive tree branches or palm fronds would have flocked to an outdoor Mass led by the pontiff. Instead, Francis celebrated Mass inside St. Peter's Basilica, which seemed even more cavernous than usual because it was so empty.

Besides his aides, a few invited prelates, nuns and laypeople were present, sitting solo in the first pews and staggered far apart to reduce the risks of contagion. A male choir, also practicing social distancing, sang hymns, accompanied by an organist.

Francis is also the bishop of Rome, and some of the parish priests in the Italian capital went to unusual lengths — or, more precisely, unusual heights — so their parishioners could follow Mass without resorting to streamed versions on TV or computers. The priests celebrated Mass on rooftops so faithful who lived nearby could watch from balconies or terraces. In one church, a priest marked Palm Sunday with Mass in the narrow confines of his church's bell tower.

Social-distancing requirements affected Palm Sunday practices around the globe. In Jerusalem, where thousands of pilgrims usually participate in the march, this year was limited to a handful of participants. Clerics and faithful went door to door often throwing the branches to Christians looking on from their balconies.

"This year because of the new situation we are trying to come to all the Christians in our Christian Quarter to bring these branches of olives, the sign of new hope," said the Rev. Sandro Tomasevic, a Catholic clergyman at the Latin Parish of Jerusalem. Palm Sunday commemorates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

In the pope's native Argentina, the faithful were using plants at home for a "virtual" blessing during live-streaming of Palm Sunday services.

In the United States, Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo directed churches not to make palm branches available in a kind of "grab and go" pickup strategy. In a tweet, Roman Catholic Bishop Thomas Tobin urged parishes to comply with the governor's order.

Wearing red robes to symbolize the blood shed by Jesus in the hours of his crucifix, Francis blessed braided palms.

"Today, in the tragedy of a pandemic, in the face of the many false securities that have now crumbled, in the face of so many hopes betrayed, in the sense of abandonment that weighs upon our hearts, Jesus says to each one of us: 'Courage, open your heart to my love,'" Francis said.

Francis urged people to hold fast to "what really matters in our lives."

"The tragedy we are experiencing summons us to take seriously the things that are serious, and not to be caught up in those that matter less, to rediscover that life is of no use if not used to serve others," the pontiff said in his homily.

In a remark directed to young people, Francis said: "Dear friends, look at the real heroes who come to light these days: they are not famous, rich and successful people."

Instead, he said, "they are those who are giving themselves in order to serve others. Feel called yourselves to put your lives on the line."

Earlier during the pandemic, Francis has praised medical staff, transport workers, supermarket clerks and others for their sacrifices to help lives.

"May we reach out to those who are suffering and those most in need," the pope said. "May we not be concerned with what we lack, but what good we can do for others."

Francis said that youth in Panama would have symbolically passed a cross on Sunday to others in Lisbon, Portugal, which will host the next Catholic world youth jamboree in 2022. Francis announced that the handover ceremony would take place instead on Nov. 22.

Noting that sports events are canceled, the pontiff said the "best fruits of sport" are evident these times: "resistance, team spirit, brotherhood, giving the best of oneself."

At the end of Mass, Francis called on faithful to spiritually draw close to the sick, their families and those treating them and to offer prayers for the deceased.

"May we reach out to those who are suffering and those most in need," the pope said. "May we not be concerned with what we lack, but what good we can do for others."

Palm Sunday opens Holy Week leading up to Easter, which this year falls on April 12. Among the usual

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events is the Good Friday Way of the Cross procession. This year, instead of the customary candlelit procession at Rome's Colosseum, the Way of the Cross will be presided over by Francis in St. Peter's Square without the public, in keeping with Italian and Vatican anti-contagion bans on gatherings.

The Vatican has said there are seven cases of COVID-19 among the residents or employees of the tiny independent city state. The virus causes mild to moderate symptoms in most people, but for some, especially older adults and the infirm, it can cause pneumonia and lead to death.

Follow AP news coverage of the coronavirus pandemic at <http://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, April 6, the 97th day of 2020. There are 269 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On April 6, 1896, the first modern Olympic games formally opened in Athens, Greece.

On this date:

In 1862, the Civil War Battle of Shiloh began in Tennessee as Confederate forces launched a surprise attack against Union troops, who beat back the Confederates the next day.

In 1864, Louisiana opened a convention in New Orleans to draft a new state constitution, one that called for the abolition of slavery.

In 1909, American explorers Robert E. Peary and Matthew A. Henson and four Inuits became the first men to reach the North Pole.

In 1917, the United States entered World War I as the House joined the Senate in approving a declaration of war against Germany that was then signed by President Woodrow Wilson.

In 1945, during World War II, the Japanese warship Yamato and nine other vessels sailed on a suicide mission to attack the U.S. fleet off Okinawa; the fleet was intercepted the next day.

In 1954, Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy, R-Wis., responding to CBS newsman Edward R. Murrow's broadside against him on "See It Now," said in remarks filmed for the program that Murrow had, in the past, "engaged in propaganda for Communist causes."

In 1968, 41 people were killed by two consecutive natural gas explosions at a sporting goods store in downtown Richmond, Indiana.

In 1971, Russian-born composer Igor Stravinsky, 88, died in New York City.

In 1974, Swedish pop group ABBA won the Eurovision Song Contest held in Brighton, England, with a performance of the song "Waterloo."

In 1985, William J. Schroeder (SHRAY'-dur) became the first artificial heart recipient to be discharged from the hospital as he moved into an apartment in Louisville, Kentucky.

In 1994, Supreme Court Justice Harry A. Blackmun announced his retirement after 24 years.

In 1998, the Dow Jones industrial average closed above 9,000 points for the first time, ending the day at 9,033.23. Country singer Tammy Wynette died at her Nashville home at age 55.

Ten years ago: The White House announced a fundamental shift in U.S. nuclear strategy that called the spread of atomic weapons to rogue states or terrorists a worse threat than the nuclear Armageddon feared during the Cold War. Former Soviet diplomat Anatoly Dobrynin, 90, died in Moscow. Actor Corin Redgrave, 70, died in London. Wilma Mankiller, the first female chief of the Cherokee Nation, died in Oklahoma at age 64.

Five years ago: The Phi Kappa Psi fraternity at the University of Virginia announced it would "pursue all available legal action" against Rolling Stone, saying a Columbia Journalism School review showed the magazine acted recklessly and defamed its members by publishing a discredited article that accused them of gang rape. Kenyan warplanes bombed militant camps in Somalia after a vow by President Uhuru Kenyatta to respond "in the fiercest way possible" to the massacre of Kenyan college students by al-Shabab



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militants. Kentucky coach John Calipari and Spencer Haywood were among 11 new inductees named to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. Duke scored a 68-63 victory over Wisconsin for the program's fifth NCAA national title. Character actor James Best, 88, best known for his role as Sheriff Rosco P. Coltrane on "The Dukes of Hazzard" comedy show, died in Hickory, North Carolina.

One year ago: Former South Carolina Democratic Sen. Ernest "Fritz" Hollings, who had also helped guide the state through desegregation as governor, died at the age of 97; he was the eighth-longest-serving senator in U.S. history. Virginia beat Auburn, and Texas Tech defeated Michigan State, to advance to the final game of the NCAA tournament.

Today's Birthdays: Nobel Prize-winning scientist James D. Watson is 92. Actor Billy Dee Williams is 83. Actor Roy Thinnes is 82. Movie director Barry Levinson is 78. Actor John Ratzenberger is 73. Actress Patrika Darbo is 72. Baseball Hall of Famer Bert Blyleven is 69. Actress Marilu Henner is 68. Olympic bronze medal figure skater Janet Lynn is 67. Actor Michael Rooker is 65. Former U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., is 64. Rock musician Warren Haynes is 60. Rock singer-musician Frank Black is 55. Actress Ari Meyers is 51. Actor Paul Rudd is 51. Actor-producer Jason Hervey is 48. Rock musician Markku Lappalainen (mar-KOO' lap-uh-LAN'-en) is 47. Actor Zach Braff is 45. Actor Joel Garland is 45. Actress Candace Cameron Bure (buh-RAY') is 44. Actor Teddy Sears is 43. Jazz and rhythm-and-blues musician Robert Glasper is 42. Actress Eliza Coupe is 39. Folk singer-musician Kenneth Pattengale (Milk Carton Kids) is 38. Actor Bret Harrison is 38. Actor Charlie McDermott is 30.

Thought for Today: "Never think that you're not good enough yourself. A man should never think that. My belief is that in life people will take you at your own reckoning." — Isaac Asimov (1920-1992).

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