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Trump: It's my decision when to reopen U.S. economy



Inside C2

# Southern DAILY Make Today Different

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# U.S. coronavirus crisis takes a sharp political turn



An Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) walks out of the Cobble Hill Health Center nursing home during the ongoing outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the Brooklyn borough of New York, U.S., April 17, 2020. REUTERS/Lucas Jackson TPX IMAGES OF THE DAY

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The U.S. coronavirus crisis took a sharp political turn on Friday as President Donald Trump lashed out at four Democratic governors over their handling of the pandemic after having conceded that states bear ultimate control of restrictions to contain the outbreak.

The Republican president targeted three swing states critical to his re-election bid - Michigan, Minnesota and Virginia - where his conservative loyalists have mounted pressure campaigns challenging those governors' stay-at-home orders.

Amplifying a theme that his supporters have trumpeted this week in street protests at the state capitals of Lansing, St. Paul, and Richmond, Trump issued a series of matching Twitter posts touting the slogans: "LIBERATE MICHIGAN!" "LIBERATE MINNESOTA!" and "LIBERATE VIRGINIA!"

#### RELATED COVERAGE

U.S. coronavirus death toll passes 35,000, cases top 700,000: Reuters tally

Michigan has become a particular focus of agitation to relax social-distancing rules that rank among the strictest in the nation after Governor Gretchen Whitmer, widely seen as a potential running mate for presumed Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, extended them through

the end of April.

Protesters defying the restrictions from the steps of the state Capitol on Wednesday shouted "lock her up," a chant that was a staple of Trump's campaign rallies and originally referred to his 2016 Democratic rival, Hillary Clinton.

#### 'WHEN IT'S SAFE'

Whitmer said on Friday she was hopeful her state, which suffered one of the country's fastest-growing coronavirus infection rates, can begin to restart parts of its economy on May 1. But she urged doing so cautiously to avoid reigniting the outbreak just as it was being brought to heel.

Responding to Trump's critique later in the day, Whitmer said Michigan will re-engage its economy when it's safe, adding: "The last thing I want to do is to have a second wave here."

Trump also took renewed aim at one of his favorite political foils, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, suggesting on Twitter that his state, the U.S. epicenter of the outbreak, had asked for too much assistance that was never fully used.

At his daily news briefing, Cuomo shot back saying Trump should "maybe get up and go to work" instead of watching TV, and accused the president of favoring the airline industry and business cronies in a recent bailout package that left little for the states.

U.S. President Donald Trump addresses the daily coronavirus task force briefing at the White House in Washington, U.S., April 17, 2020. REUTERS/Leah Millis

The flare-up in political sparring came as the number of known coronavirus infections in the United States surpassed 700,000, the most of any country. At the same time, the tally of lives lost from COVID-19, the highly contagious lung disease caused by the virus, has soared to more than 35,000. New York state accounts for nearly half those deaths. While the death toll continued to climb, the rate of hospitalizations and other indicators have been leveling off, a sign that drastic social-distancing restrictions imposed in 42 of the 50 U.S. states were working to curtail the outbreak. Stay-at-home orders and the closure of non-essential businesses have also strangled U.S. commerce, triggering millions of layoffs and forecasts that America is headed for its deepest recession since the economic collapse of the 1930s.

The result has been mounting pressure to ease the shutdowns, leading to clashes between Trump, who had touted the strength of the U.S. economy as the best case for his re-election in November, and governors in hard-hit states who warned against lifting restrictions too quickly.



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# European coronavirus app platform gains traction with governments

BERLIN (Reuters) - A European technology platform to support smartphone apps that can help trace people at risk of infection by the new coronavirus is gaining support from governments, one of its prime movers said on Friday.

Seven countries have either formally supported the Pan-European Privacy Preserving Proximity Tracing (PEPP-PT <https://www.pepp-pt.org>) initiative or tasked one of its members with developing a national app, German tech entrepreneur Chris Boos told Reuters.

PEPP-PT has emerged as a leading proponent of the use of Bluetooth short-range communications between personal devices as a proxy for measuring the risk that a person infected with coronavirus can pass it on.

"A lot of larger countries have dedicated their app teams to build on top of what we're supplying," Boos, a co-initiator of PEPP-PT and founder of business automation startup Arago, said in an interview.

He listed Austria, Germany, France, Italy, Malta, Spain and Switzerland, adding that another 40 countries had registered and were in the process of being brought on-board.

More than 200 scientists and technologists are collaborating on PEPP-PT, conceived as the backbone for national apps that would comply with Europe's strict privacy rules and be able to "talk" to each other across borders.

Technologists are rushing to devise digital methods to fight a disease that has infected more than 2 million people worldwide, 150,000 of whom have died. Automating the assessment of who is at risk and telling them to see a doctor, get tested or self isolate, is seen by advocates as a way to speed up a painstaking task that typically entails phone calls and door knocks.



FILE PHOTO: People wearing protective face masks use a smartphone on a street in Kiev, Ukraine, March 17, 2020. REUTERS/Valentyn Ogirenko/File Photo

**DATA PRIVACY**

The approach is based on work here by researchers at Oxford University's Big Data Institute who argue that if 60% of a population uses such an app that would be enough to suppress the pandemic.

This would be tough to reach if apps are voluntary. But even with lower takeup one infection can be prevented by every 1 or 2 people using an app, Oxford's Christophe Fraser told a separate video briefing.

A schism has however opened up among technologists around issues of data privacy, with some favouring decentralized approaches that do not host sensitive data on a main server over more centralized systems.

Boos said PEPP-PT could work in either setting. "Both models have their pros and cons ... A country has to pick which system it needs."

Italy has backed a contact tracing app

developed by Milan startup Bending Spoons, a member of PEPP-PT, while Germany plans to roll out an app under development by the Fraunhofer Heinrich Hertz Institute, another participant.

In France, the INRIA digital research institute is also working to develop an app based on PEPP-PT. "We are fully committed to make this pan-European initiative a success," said INRIA head Bruno Sportisse.

Stay Healthy!

## BUSINESS

Wash Your Hands!

### Coronavirus: Trump Unveils Plan To Reopen States In 3 Phases



President Donald Trump speaks about the coronavirus in the James Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House, Thursday, April 16, 2020. Trump said the country was 'in the process of winning' the war against the coronavirus.

**OVERVIEW**

The White House released guidelines for reopening the country

Trump spoke about the guidelines at the White House

One benchmark is a sustained drop in cases over two weeks

He didn't specify which states might move toward reopening first

First phase would have schools remain closed

Told governors: 'You are going to call your own shots'

By Phase Three people could visit nursing homes, where virus has spread

Guidelines do not extend to a final phase with what used to describe normal life with packed concert halls, full bars, and minimal distancing

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

As Covid-19 continues to spread across the US, President Donald Trump has given governors guidance on reopening state economies in the coming months. The guidelines for "Opening up America Again" outline three phases for states to gradually ease their lockdowns.

Trump promised governors they would be handling the process themselves, with help from the federal government. There has been a mixed reception to the plans, with a leading Democrat calling them vague and inconsistent. The US currently has 654,301 confirmed cases and 32,186 deaths due to the virus, and the president has suggested some

states could reopen this month.

In his daily briefing on Thursday, President Trump declared, "the next front in our war - opening up America again".

"America wants to be open and Americans want to be open," he said. "A national shutdown is not a sustainable long-term solution."

He said that a prolonged lockdown risked inflicting a serious toll on public health. He warned of a "sharp rise" in drug abuse, alcohol abuse, heart disease, and other "physical and mental" problems.

Mr. Trump told reporters that healthy citizens would be able to return to work "as conditions allow". He said Americans

would continue to be called upon to maintain social distancing measures and to stay home if they are unwell.

He said that reopening the US economy would be done "one

- Phase One**
- All vulnerable people should shelter in place.
  - Avoid socializing in groups of more than 10.
  - Non-essential travel should be minimized.
  - Working from home where possible.
  - Schools and youth activities remain closed.
  - Large public venues such as movie theaters, restaurants, sporting venues and places of worship can operate under strict social distancing rules.
  - Elective surgeries can resume.
  - Gyms can reopen if they stick to strict social distancing.

- Phase Two**
- Non-essential travel can resume.
  - Schools and youth activities can reopen.
  - All vulnerable people should continue to shelter in place, gatherings of more than 50 people should be avoided.
  - People are encouraged to work from home.
  - Large venues can operate under moderate social distancing rules.
  - Bars may operate with diminished standing room occupancy.

- Phase Three**
- Vulnerable people can resume public interactions, but should practice social distancing.
  - Visits to senior care facilities and hospitals can resume.
  - Employers can resume unrestricted staffing at work sites.
  - Low risk populations should consider minimizing time spent in crowded places.
  - Large venues can operate under limited social distancing rules.
  - Bars may operate with increased standing room.

careful step at a time" but he called on state governors to move "very, very quickly, depending on what they want to do".

Shortly afterwards, leading Democrat Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, called the new guidelines "vague and inconsistent".

She said the document did "nothing to make up for the president's failure to listen to the scientists and produce and distribute national rapid testing".

**What is in the plan?**

The administration's 18-page guidance document details three phases to reopen state economies, with each phase lasting, at minimum, 14 days.

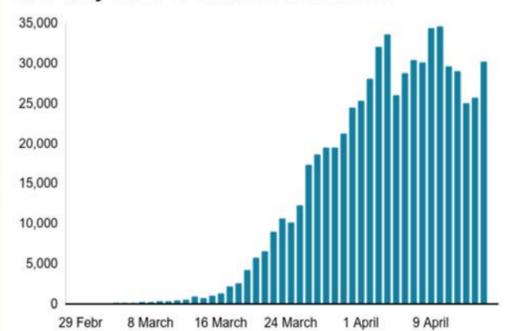
They include some recommendations across all three phases including good personal hygiene and employers developing policies to ensure social distancing, testing and contact tracing.

**Phase one** includes much of the current lockdown measures such as avoiding non-essential travel and not gathering in groups. But it says large venues such as restaurants, places of worship and sports venues "can operate under strict physical distancing protocols".

If there is no evidence of a resurgence of the coronavirus, **phase two** allows non-essential travel to resume. The guidance says schools can reopen and bars can operate "with diminished standing-room occupancy".

Under **phase three**, states which are still seeing a downward trend of symptoms and cases can allow "public interactions" with physical distancing and the unrestricted staffing of worksites. Visits to care homes and hospitals can resume and bars can increase their standing room capacity.

**New daily cases of coronavirus in the US**



Source: Covid Tracking Project, 15 April

Some regions could begin returning to normal after a month-long evaluation period, at the earliest, according to the document.

In places where there are more infections or where rates begin to rise, it could take longer.

The co-ordinator of the White House coronavirus task force, Dr Deborah Birx, told Thursday's briefing that as states worked through the three phases, they could allow for more and more employees to return to work in increments.

Phase three would be the "new normal", she said, and would still include suggestions that vulnerable people should avoid crowded spaces. (Courtesy <https://www.bbc.com/news/world> and <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/>)

# Editor's Choice



Municipal workers, wearing protective clothing, disinfect a car in a sanitary barrier during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, in Sao Sebastiao, Sao Paulo state, Brazil, April 18, 2020. REUTERS/Roosevelt Cassio



A trader wears a face mask on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) following traders testing positive for Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), in New York, U.S., March 19, 2020. REUTERS/Lucas Jackson TPX IMAGES OF THE DAY



A protester holds a sign reading "Vaccination terrorism" during a demonstration of conspiracy theorists as other demonstrators protest against the lockdown imposed to slow the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), in Berlin, Germany, April 18, 2020. REUTERS/Christian Mang



A supporter of Donald Trump holds a flag during a demonstration of conspiracy theorists as other demonstrators protest against the lockdown imposed to slow the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Berlin, Germany, April 18, 2020. REUTERS/Christian Mang



Police officers detain a person during a demonstration of conspiracy theorists and other demonstrators protest against the lockdown imposed to slow the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), in Berlin, Germany, April 18, 2020. REUTERS/Christian Mang



A priest prays while believers keep a social distance during a ceremony to bless Easter cakes and eggs in Lviv



A worker wearing a face mask milks a cow in a cowshed at Cascina Sant'Andrea beef and milk production company, as the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) continues, in Moriondo Torinese, Italy April 18, 2020. REUTERS/Massimo Pinca



Bertinchamps mortuary workers load in a hearse the coffin of a person who died of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) after his funeral, in Charleroi, Belgium April 18, 2020. REUTERS/Yves Herman

Coronavirus Testing In The U.S. – Painfully Slow

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

“YOU WANT SOMETHING THAT WOULD GIVE YOU A RESULT IN 10 TO 20 MINUTES”



to commercialize it, so there's no clear pathway to get it up and running during an emergency.



CURRENT GOLD STANDARDS

A week after the genetic sequence for the novel coronavirus first became available in January, German researchers had designed a PCR test that could detect the virus in a patient sample.

PCR is the gold-standard testing platform for viruses because it's highly sensitive, says Paul Yager, a professor in the department of bioengineering at the University of Washington — it can detect even a tiny amount of virus in a patient sample and is less likely to incorrectly have a negative result.

which is done on a specific machine. It takes a few hours to get results back.



“Not every lab can do PCR. It requires a very clean lab, and it's hard to troubleshoot,” Klapperich says.

Instead of using the WHO protocol, the CDC decided to create its own test using three different genes from the German test. That's not an entirely unusual decision — the agency also created its own test during the Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2015.

INSTEAD OF USING THE WHO PROTOCOL, THE CDC DECIDED TO CREATE ITS OWN TEST

Normally, state public health labs and commercial labs would have been able to create their own PCR tests once it was clear the CDC test wasn't working.

contributed to delays in testing. On February 29th, the agency relaxed that rule, and commercial labs started COVID-19 testing. Machines are available that can run PCR tests automatically, which also speeds the process.



POINT OF CARE

PCR tests are still the most reliable method of diagnosing a viral infection in a patient, even if the US is currently struggling to get up and running.

Doctors regularly run flu tests in their offices and can have results back in around 15 minutes. Those types of tests don't look for influenza genes in a patient sample. Instead, they look for proteins on the surface of the virus.

中国经济 Daily News

受新冠疫情衝擊，中國一季度GDP同比下降6.8%，為1992年有記錄以來的28年內首次出現負增長。

香港文匯報記者 海巖 北京報道

中國首季GDP降6.8% 28年首現負增長

互聯網及相關服務逆勢增長 顯示新動能強大競爭力

國家統計局初步核算顯示，今年一季度，中國GDP同比下降6.8%，增速較2019年四季度回落12.8個百分點。

第三產業增加值佔比提高

從環比看，一季度GDP下降9.8%，2019年四季度為1.5%。與市場預期服務業受衝擊最大有所不同，第二產業降幅最大，達到9.6%，明顯高於第三產業5.2%的降幅。

3月份，隨著國內疫情逐步控制、復工復產推進，主要經濟指標從歷史低位反彈。

生產端，規模以上工業增加值同比降幅大幅收窄至1.1%，統計局稱工業產出水平基本恢復到去年同期水平。

統計局：料二季度明顯進步

國家統計局新聞發言人毛盛勇在國新辦記者會上表示，一季度在新冠肺炎疫情衝擊下，中國經濟社會大局保持穩定。

經濟“新動能”升勢不變

毛盛勇還引述國際貨幣基金組織（IMF）預測稱，IMF預計中國經濟今年增長1.2%，2021年增速為9.2%，意味着今年和明年平均增長5%以上。



快速回升，顯示中國經濟新動能持續增長的潛力。疫情衝擊最嚴重的1月份至2月份，主要行業均呈現雙位數下滑，互聯網和相關服務營業收入則逆勢增長，增速分別達到10.1%。

中國美國商會：大多美企無意撤華

香港文匯報訊 據中社報道，中國美國商會17日發佈調查報告稱，儘管新冠肺炎疫情的影響尚未完全結束，但是絕大部分在華美企暫無轉移生產線或取消在華採購項目的計劃。

據路透社報道，該項調查報告由中國美國商會駐北京和上海辦事處與普華永道聯合開展，結果顯示，近70%的受訪者預測其在華供應業務將於3個月內恢復正常，96%的受訪者預測其在華業務將於3個月到6個月內回歸常態。

中國美國商會會長畢文倫就此表示：“我們在中國得出的調查數據與部分國際媒體的報道內容恰恰相反。據我們所知，中國美國商會絕大部分會員在短期內都不會撤出中國。”

據悉，該項調查是在3月6日至13日期間開展的，調查對象為任職於全年營業收入超5億美元公司的高級管理人員，累計收到25家在華美企的回覆。

路透社刊文指出，自2月以來，中國穩步採取系列措施，有序推進各行業復工復產，並逐步放寬旅行限制，以重振經濟。

據悉，調查受訪者認為，目前最大的挑戰來自物流運輸和後勤保障，今後或將面臨貨源短缺的問題。

普華永道中國諮詢合夥人揚·尼古拉斯說：“新冠疫情使得全球範圍內的供應和需求都受到了影響。這推動了對供應鏈多元化進行更全面分析的需求。”

此前，4月9日，白宮國家經濟委員會主任庫德洛提出一項讓美國企業撤出中國、回流美國的建議，他認為這些從中國遷回美國的企業給予100%直接報銷，包括廠房、設備、知識產權、基建、裝修等所有費用。



中國美國商會的調查報告稱，大部分在華美企暫無轉移生產線或取消在華採購項目的計劃。圖為特斯拉上海工廠生產線。