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Oil in the age of coronavirus: a U.S. shale bust like no other



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Southern DAILY

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Global coronavirus cases rise above 13 million, WHO sounds alarm



FILE PHOTO: Director-General of the WHO Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, attends a news conference on the coronavirus (COVID-2019) in Geneva, Switzerland February 24, 2020. REUTERS/Denis Balibouse/File Photo

(Reuters) - Coronavirus infections rose above 13 million across the world on Monday, according to a Reuters tally, climbing by one million in just five days in a pandemic that has killed more than half a million people.

FILE PHOTO: Director-General of the WHO Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, attends a news conference on the coronavirus (COVID-2019) in Geneva, Switzerland February 24, 2020. REUTERS/Denis Balibouse/File Photo
World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said there would be no return to the old normal for the foreseeable future, with too many countries headed in the wrong direction.

"The virus remains public enemy number one," he told a virtual briefing from WHO headquarters in Geneva.

"If basics are not followed, the only way this pandemic is going to go, it is going to get worse and worse and worse. But it does not have to be this way."

The Reuters global tally, which is based on government reports, shows the disease is accelerating the fastest in Latin America. The Americas account for more than half the world's infections and half the deaths.

Parts of the world, especially the United States with more than 3.3 million confirmed cases, are still seeing huge

increases in a first wave of COVID-19 infections, while others "flatten the curve" and ease lockdowns.

Some places, such as the Australian city of Melbourne and Leicester in England, are implementing a second round of shutdowns. Chinese-ruled Hong Kong, albeit with a low 1,522 cases, is to tighten social distancing measures again amid growing worries about a third wave.

The United States reported a daily global record of 69,070 new infections on July 10. In Brazil, 1.86 million people have tested positive, including President Jair Bolsonaro, and more than 72,000 people have died.

The U.S. state of Florida reported a record increase of more than 15,000 new cases in 24 hours on Sunday, more than South Korea's total since the disease was first identified at the end of last year. Florida tallied 12,624 new cases on Monday.

Coronavirus infections were rising in about 40 U.S. states, according to a Reuters analysis of cases for the past two weeks compared with the prior two weeks.

Yet U.S. President Donald Trump and White House officials have repeatedly said the disease is under control and that schools must reopen in the autumn.

"The president and his administration are messing with the

health of our children," House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said on CNN's "State of the Union" programme.
"We all want our children to go back to school, parents do and children do. But they must go back safely."

STAY AT HOME

Hungary has imposed new restrictions on cross-border travel as of next Wednesday in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus after a surge in new cases in several countries, Prime Minister Viktor Orban's chief of staff said on Sunday.

The leader of the Spanish region of Catalonia called on residents of an area that has seen a surge in coronavirus cases to stay at home despite a ruling by a judge who threw out a mandatory lockdown order for the district of 160,000 people.

Spain, which has been one of the European countries worst hit by the coronavirus, lifted nationwide confinement last month, when the pandemic seemed to have come under control.

Since the first cases were reported in China around the new year, it took three months to reach one million cases. It has taken just five days to climb to 13 million cases from 12 million recorded on July 8.

India, the country with the third-highest number of infections, has been contending with an average of 23,000 new infections each day since the beginning of July.

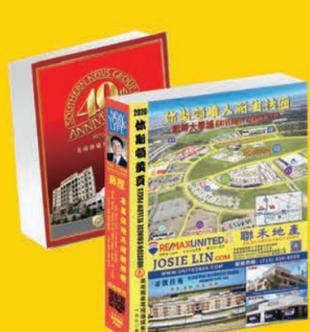
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Houston Leaders Consider New Lockdown As County Reports Over 27,600 Active COVID-19 Cases



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

Houston leaders are calling for another lockdown as the number of active cases of the coronavirus in the county increased to more than 27,600 on Sunday. Houston's Harris County — the most populous county in Texas — has been the hardest-hit in the Lone Star State. "Not only do we need a stay home order now, but we need to stick with it this time until the hospitalization curve comes down, not just flattens," Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo tweeted Sunday. "Many communities that persevered in that way are reopening for the long haul. Let's learn from that & not make the same mistake twice." Texas Governor Greg Abbott, who had previously resisted a mask order in the state, warned Friday that the state would need to lockdown further if the case numbers don't decrease. "The worst is yet to come as we work our way through that massive increase in people testing positive," Abbott told CBS affiliate KLBK-TV. "The only way that we can keep our businesses open, the only way that we can continue to have a job they need to pay their bill is for everyone to adopt this practice of wearing a face mask."



Abbott extended a statewide disaster mandate on Friday. Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner said Saturday that he disagreed with Abbott's plan to reopen schools. "It makes no sense to be having this conversation while this virus is out of control," Turner said, according to CBS Houston affiliate KHOU-TV. "You don't send kids back to school when there's a raging fire and the fires still burning in August. Put the doggone fire out in July, so shut down for a couple of weeks." In El Paso, the state's sixth-largest city, city-county health authority Dr. Hector Ocaranza ordered schools to remain closed until September 8, according to the El Paso Times. The county had a spike of 411 new cases on Sunday. "This virus is spreading like wildfire in our community and the only way to slow the spread is for everybody to take this seriously and stay home," Ocaranza said

in a statement, according to CBS El Paso affiliate KDBC-TV. "If they must go out, it is important to practice all safety precautions."



The number of coronavirus cases throughout Texas increased by more than 8,100 on Sunday, according to the state Department of Health. There were 80 fatalities.

The number of people hospitalized statewide increased again Sunday to more than 10,400, and there are 977 open ICU beds. The hospitalization rate has increased every day since June 11, when 2,008 people were hospitalized.

The U.S. Army Northern Command confirmed Sunday that it had sent 580 military medical personnel to Texas hospitals to assist in caring for coronavirus patients. (Courtesy <https://www.cbsnews.com/>)

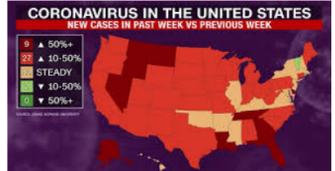
Related
Fauci says hard-hit states should be 'pausing' the reopening process



Dr. Anthony Fauci

Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert, said Thursday that hard-hit states should not be moving forward with reopening, but stopped short of calling for full shutdowns. "I would think we need to get the states pausing in their opening process, looking at what did not work well and try to mitigate that," Fauci, a member of the White House coronavirus task force, told The Hill's Steve Clemons. "I don't think we need to go back to an extreme of shutting

down." Fauci struck a different note than he did a day earlier in an interview with The Wall Street Journal when he said states should consider shutdowns. "I think any state that is having a serious problem, that state should seriously look at shutting down," he said Wednesday. "It's not for me to say because each state is different."



On Thursday, though, he softened his remarks, saying, "I would hope we don't have to resort to shutdown." He added that shutdowns "would not be viewed very favorably."

Speaking at an event hosted by The Hill and sponsored by the Biosimilars Forum, he said hard-hit states should take steps like closing bars, which many have done in recent days, and avoiding large gatherings.

He pointed to California, Arizona, Texas and Florida as accounting for 50 percent of new infections. "We've got to get them to do very fundamental things," Fauci said. "Closing bars, avoiding congregations of large numbers of people, getting the citizenry in those states to wear masks, maintain six foot distance, [and washing hands]."

"If we can do that consistently, I would tell you almost certainly you're going to see a downturn in those infections," he added.

As new cases have spiked to around 60,000 per day in the United States, Fauci had a somber assessment.



We've been hit harder than any country

in the world," he said. In contrast, President Trump has continued to downplay the worsening outbreak, tweeting on Thursday that the new cases are simply the result of more testing, despite experts widely saying that is not true. Experts point out that the percentage of tests that come back positive is rising as are hospitalizations in key states, signs that the outbreak cannot be blamed solely on more testing. Trump also earlier encouraged states to quickly reopen their economies. Fauci said Thursday that some Southern states now being hit hard reopened too soon, and not in accordance with the benchmarks in the White House guidelines. "What we've seen, unfortunately, is that in some of the southern states, the states have not really followed those guidelines in some respects and jumped over the benchmarks," Fauci said. (Courtesy thehill.com)



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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

07/13/2020

CORONAVIRUS DIARY

This Is The Time To Be United

We are the country that is suffering more than twenty-five percent of the world's coronavirus confirmed cases. It is very ironic when we are the strongest medical nation in the world.

There are many reasons, including cultural differences from east and west. We all want freedom and liberty and don't want to listen to authority especially when the federal and local governments don't work together. In the last two

months, Texas and Florida opened back up too soon. Then people flocked to restaurants, bars and beaches without wearing masks. For sure, the virus will spread again.

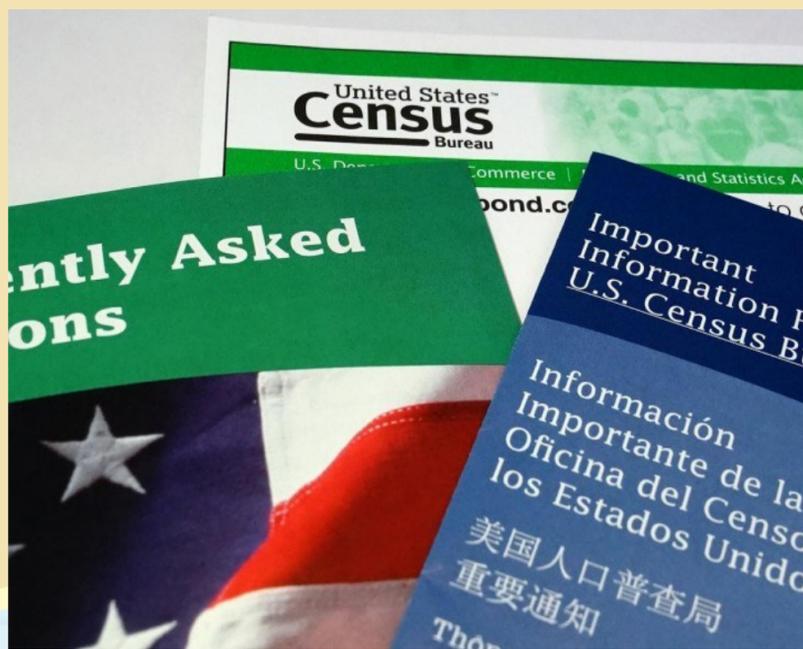
We feel very regretful and sorry for those people who have had to give up their businesses. Many of them have also lost their loved ones.

A lot of people in our community are new



immigrants who have just been naturalized as citizens. Together we all need to go to vote and fill out the 2020 census because this is very important for the national distribution of resources.

We are witnessing that the politicians are using the many issues today to gain their own political ambitions. This is the time we need to be united and act.



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Editor's Choice



President Donald Trump wears a mask while visiting Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. REUTERS/Tasos Katopodis



People are drenched by sea spray thrown up by huge swells as a cold front moves in over Cape Town, South Africa. REUTERS/Mike Hutchings



Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton raises his fist on the podium after winning the F1 Steiermark Grand Prix in Styria, Austria. REUTERS/Leonhard Foeger/Pool



Firefighting boats spray water onto the U.S. Navy amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard as smoke rises from a fire onboard the ship at Naval Base San Diego, as seen from Coronado, California. REUTERS/Bing Guan



NHRA top fuel driver Kyle Wurtzel explodes an engine on fire during qualifying for the E3 Spark Plugs Nationals at Lucas Oil Raceway in Clermont, Indiana. Mark J. Rebilas-USA TODAY Sports



Kang Nan-hee, wife of late Seoul Mayor Park Won-soon, arrives for his funeral at Seoul City Hall Plaza, in Seoul, South Korea. REUTERS/Kim Hong-Ji



Mothers, spouses and relatives of loved ones lost to police violence join supporters protesting racial inequality in the National Mothers March Against Police Violence in St. Paul, Minnesota. REUTERS/Brandon Bell



Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro is seen at the Alvorada Palace, amid the coronavirus outbreak, in Brasilia, Brazil. REUTERS/Ueslei Marcelino

Judge Denies Texas Republican Party's Request To Force Houston To Host In-Person Convention



The 2020 Texas GOP convention was set to take place at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, until Mayor Sylvester Turner announced it would be canceled over public health concerns. (Photo/David J. Phillip/AP)

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

(CNN)A county court judge denied a request by the Texas Republican Party to hold its convention in Houston after Democratic Mayor Sylvester Turner canceled a contract to hold it in the city, the party said.

The State Republican Executive Committee had passed a resolution on July 3 reinforcing its support for the party's in-person convention and noting increased health and safety precautions. Still, state Republican leaders including Gov. Greg Abbott and Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick planned to give their speeches virtually.

The convention center is owned and operated by Houston First, a local government corporation.

Houston First sent a letter to GOP officials on Wednesday terminating their hosting agreement, citing the severity of the pandemic and the risk of large indoor gatherings.

"Houston has experienced a significant increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases since Memorial Day Weekend, straining the availability of healthcare resources, and there is no indication that the current crisis will slow or reverse course," they wrote.



Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner announced the Republican convention would be canceled over public health concerns. (Photo/David J. Phillip/AP)

The city's health department reported 204 new cases of COVID-19 on Wednesday, but noted a computer glitch is likely understating the number. Overall, the city has recorded 25,600 cases and 245 deaths. James Dickey, chairman of the Republican Party of Texas, criticized the move in a statement issued Wednesday and said the party's legal team is "assessing the ability of the City to act at this time in this manner and weighing our legal options." He added that Turner had allowed protesters to peaceably assemble in the city, and argued the convention should be equally protected.

Harris County District Judge Larry Weiman denied the party's request to block

the city from restricting the convention on the grounds of limiting coronavirus risk, the party said in a statement Thursday night. The party said that it "will proceed in filing its appeal directly to the Texas Supreme Court given the time sensitivity of the matter as the Convention was scheduled to begin its committee meetings on Monday at the George R. Brown Convention Center."



The Republican Party of Texas is suing Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner and others involved with the canceling of the party's in-person convention, which was scheduled to happen next week.

The party has also called for a meeting of the State Republican Executive Committee on Saturday to "finalize location matters based upon the outcome of the case," according to the statement. The party is suing Turner, the convention venue's operator and the city for breach of contract and had asked a judge to force the convention center to comply with the contract, according to an earlier news release.

"Our objective is that the courts will hear and rule in our favor in time to open up the George R. Brown Convention Center Monday morning so that we may safely begin our vital work in the electoral process," the party said in a statement earlier Thursday.

Turner said Wednesday that he had asked the city's legal department to review the contract between the State Republican Executive Committee and the convention venue's operator, Houston First Corporation. He announced later Wednesday that he had officially instructed Houston First Corporation to cancel its contract with the state GOP.

Turner told reporters during a press conference on Thursday that he had yet to see the lawsuit filed by Texas Republicans, but welcomed the legal challenge. Turner pointed out that they planned to ask a court -- that still isn't meeting in person -- to grant their request for a big, in-person event.

"It's ironic that they are going to the court-

house, that in many cases is hearing and seeing cases virtually, to ask them to agree to allow 6,000 people to meet in person when even the judicial community -- the United States Supreme Court, I believe, is hearing cases virtually. Now isn't that ironic? I don't think I need to say anything more," he said.



Turner garnered national attention in making the announcement, with the Democrat speaking in deeply personal terms about the memory of his late mother to explain his decision.

"The linchpin for me (was) when one of the people on my staff, combined with my sister, who said to me, 'Mayor, brother, your mom was a maid working at these hotels. And if your mom was alive today working at one of these hotels (would) you as the mayor still allow this convention to go forth and run the risk of infecting your mom?'" he said.

The decision by Turner is a first in a showdown between Republican and Democratic leaders in the battle over safely reopening the country. Republicans, led by President Donald Trump, have pushed for holding campaign events in person as opposed to virtually as they push toward the fall election. While some local leaders have expressed concern about large-scale political events and rallies, this is the first time an elected leader has made a formal move to prevent one from taking place.

In Tulsa, Oklahoma, the city's health director, Bruce Dart, expressed concerns about the Trump campaign's rally last month in that city, but Republican Mayor G.T. Bynum and the Oklahoma Supreme Court declined to prevent it from happening. In New Hampshire, Republican Gov. Chris Sununu said that he personally wouldn't attend the Trump rally has planned for Saturday because of the health concerns but declined to prevent the gathering from moving forward.

The legal battle in Houston could serve as

a precursor to the situation in Jacksonville, Florida, where GOP leaders are planning their national convention. Unlike in Houston, Jacksonville's Mayor Lenny Curry is a Republican and has been supportive of plans to hold the event in his city. Despite his support, a group of Jacksonville residents have banded together and filed a lawsuit in an attempt to either scale back the event or prevent from happening altogether.

Texas is one of several states grappling with increasing coronavirus cases, with Houston having been eyed last month as one of the potentially hardest-hit cities in the US. Harris County, which encompasses Houston and is the most populous county in Texas, has led the state in confirmed cases.



Dr. David Persse, who serves as health authority for the Houston Health Department, said during a news conference last week that the city had reached a 25% positivity rate.

"The virus is very prevalent in the community," Persse said, adding that at the time there were more than 1,200 people in Houston hospitals and more than 500 of them in the ICU due to complications from the coronavirus. "The virus is very much out there," he said. "It's very much actively spreading."

Last month, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott suspended all elective surgeries in hospitals in four counties that are home to the cities of San Antonio, Dallas, Houston and Austin. The counties had had "significant increases" in Covid-19 hospitalizations, Abbott said. Texas is expected to see nearly 2,000 new hospitalizations per day by mid-July, according to forecasts published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The state has already seen more than 225,400 cases and over 2,800 deaths from the virus, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. (Courtesy <https://www.npr.org/>)

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