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**John Robbins** 281-965-6390  
**Jun Gai** 281-498-4310

**Publisher:** Wea H. Lee  
**President:** Catherine Lee  
**Editor:** John Robbins

**Address:** 11122 Bellaire Blvd.,  
Houston, TX 77072  
**E-mail:** [News@scdaily.com](mailto:News@scdaily.com)



Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Thursday, June 17 2021|

## Far apart at first summit, Biden and Putin agree to steps on cybersecurity, arms control

GENEVA, June 16 (Reuters) - U.S. President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed on Wednesday to begin cybersecurity and arms control talks at a summit that laid bare their deep discord on those issues, human rights and Ukraine. In their first meeting since he took office in January, Biden asked Putin how he would feel if a ransomware attack hit Russia's oil pipelines, a pointed question referencing the May shutdown of a pipeline that caused disruptions and panic-buying along the U.S. East Coast. While Biden stressed that he did not make threats during the three-hour meeting, he said he outlined U.S. vital interests, including on cybersecurity, and made clear to Putin that the United States would respond if Russia infringed on those concerns. Both men used careful pleasantries to describe their talks in a lakeside Swiss villa, with Putin calling them constructive and without hostility and Biden saying there was no substitute for face-to-face discussions.

They also agreed to send their ambassadors back to their capitals. Russia recalled its envoy after Biden said in March that he thought Putin was a "killer", and the United States recalled its ambassador soon after. Putin said on Wednesday that he had been satisfied by Biden's explanation of the remark. But there was no hiding their differences on issues such as human rights, where Biden said the consequences for Russia would be "devastating" if jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny died, or cyberspace, where Washington has demanded Moscow crack down on ransomware attacks emanating from Russian soil. "I looked at him and said how would you feel if ransomware took on the pipelines from your oil fields? He said it would matter," Biden told reporters at a solo news conference, itself an illustration of the tensions between the two nations.

"What happens if that ransomware outfit were sitting in Florida or Maine, and took action as I said, on their ... single lifeline to their economy, oil? That'd be devastating," he said, adding he could see the question's impact on Russian officials. The query referred to a cyberattack that closed the Colonial Pipeline Co (COLPI.UL) system for several days in May, preventing millions of barrels of gasoline, diesel and jet fuel from flowing to the East Coast from the Gulf Coast. "THIS IS NOT ABOUT TRUST" Speaking to reporters before Biden, Putin dismissed U.S. concerns about Navalny, Russia's increased military presence near Ukraine's eastern border and U.S. suggestions that Rus-



sians were responsible for the cyberattacks on the United States.

He also suggested Washington was in no position to lecture Moscow on rights, batting away question about his crackdown on political rivals by saying he was trying to avoid the "disorder" of a popular movement such as Black Lives Matter. "What we saw was disorder, disruption, violations of the law, etc. We feel sympathy for the United States of America, but we don't want that to happen on our territory and we'll do our utmost in order to not allow it to happen," he said.

U.S. President Joe Biden and Russia's President Vladimir Putin shake hands as they arrive for the U.S.-Russia summit at Villa La Grange in Geneva, Switzerland, June 16, 2021. REUTERS/Kevin Lamarque

He also seemed to question the legitimacy of arresting the rioters who attacked the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, seeking to stop Biden's certification as president after he beat his predecessor Donald Trump in a general election by over seven million votes. Biden said any comparison between what happened on Jan. 6 and the Black Lives Matter movement was "ridiculous."



U.S.-Russia relations have deteriorated for years, notably with Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine, its 2015 intervention in Syria and U.S. charges - denied by Moscow - of meddling in the 2016 election that brought Trump to the White House. Neither side gave details on how their planned cybersecurity talks might unfold, though Biden said he told Putin critical infrastructure should be "off-limits" to cyberattacks, saying this included 16 sectors that he did not identify. read more "We need some basic rules of the road that we can all abide by," Biden said he had told Putin.

Biden said he had raised human rights issues because it was in the "DNA" of his country to do so, and also the fate of U.S. citizens jailed in Russia. Putin said he believed some compromises could be found, although he gave no indication of any prisoner exchange deal. Putin, 68, called Biden, 78, a constructive, experienced partner, and said they spoke "the same language." But he added that there had been no friendship, rather a pragmatic dialogue about their two countries' interests.



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# WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

## CORONAVIRUS DIARY

06/16/2021

### Celebrating Our 42th Anniversary Entering The Melted Media Age



In the history of Asian media, Southern News Group has gone through 42 years since its inception on June 16, 1979.

On the road that has been full of thorns and hope, we and many of our partners have been through the struggle of time and darkness. This media carrier will continue to advance.

SNG was born in the era of great change. For more than forty years the world structure has changed due to wars and disasters. We as newsmen can experience the changes of the world over time and many moving and exciting stories are displayed before our eyes. How many cruel and amazing pictures have appeared in our newspapers and on our television screens that have made our lives more colorful and exciting.

Today we are moving toward a new era of MELTED MEDIA using the internet as a carrier to fully integrate Southern TV, newspaper, social media and social services to achieve a new type of media.

In the diversification of the operation methods in the goals we pursue, we are looking for success and not just for survival.

After four decades of journey we really appreciate this great land that has given us opportunity and hope.



**Wea H. Lee**  
Wealee@scdaily.com

Chairman of International District Houston Texas

**Publisher Southern Daily Wea H. Lee**

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Chairman of International Trade & Culture Center  
Republic of Guiana Honorary consul at Houston Texas



**Southern DAILY** Make Today Different

## Editor's Choice



U.S. President Joe Biden and Russia's President Vladimir Putin meet for the U.S.-Russia summit at Villa La Grange in Geneva, Switzerland, June 16, 2021. REUTERS/Kevin Lamarque



Sea-surface-cleaning vessels and barrier-laying boats of Istanbul Municipality clean up the sea snot, a thick slimy layer of the organic matter also known as marine mucilage, spreading through the Sea of Marmara and posing a threat to marine life and the fishing industry, in Istanbul, Turkey June 15, 2021. REUTERS/Umit Bektas



Climate change activists dressed up as black birds protest in St. Ives, on the sidelines of the G7 summit in Cornwall, Britain, June 11, 2021. REUTERS/Dylan Martinez



German tourists stand on the cruise ship 'Mein Schiff 2' of the company TUI Cruises after it was docked at dawn in Malaga port, becoming the first cruise ship carrying tourists to arrive on Spain's mainland since June 2020, amid the coronavirus pandemic, in Malaga, southern Spain, June 15, 2021. REUTERS/Jon Nazca



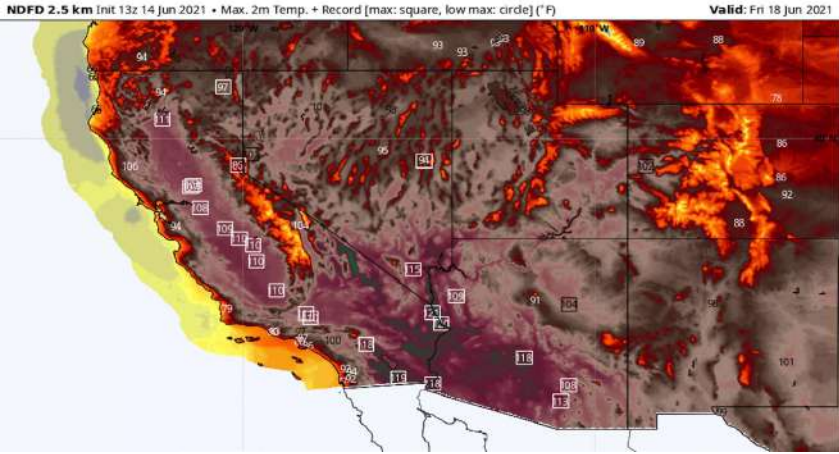
Workers wearing protective suits rest after burying a coronavirus victim in Bandung, West Java province, Indonesia, June 15, 2021. Antara Foto/Raisan Al Farisi/ via REUTERS



Inflatable dummies depicting U.S. President Joe Biden and Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson are displayed on a pontoon floating off Gyllyngvase Beach during an action organized by Crack the Crisis, in Falmouth, on the sidelines of G7 summit in Cornwall, Britain, June 11, 2021. REUTERS/Tom Nicholson



Dangerous Heat Wave Underway  
In Southwest, Will Shatter Records



Projected high temperatures for Friday, June 18, 2021 shown, with record-breaking temperatures marked by a rectangle. (Image: Weatherbell.)

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

A punishing mid-June heat wave is set to scorch much of the Southwest and West this week, with Las Vegas potentially eclipsing its highest temperature on record, which stands at 117°F. More than 48 million people across the west are now under heat advisory watches or warnings from the National Weather Service, which is predicting that statewide records will be broken in Nevada and Arizona, along with hundreds of new daily record-high temperatures set in cities in the coming days.

“This type of heat is unusual for the month of June,” said Julie Malingowski, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service (NWS), adding that most heatwaves that have historically affected the western US occurred in July and August. The triple-digit heat is expected to extend from Tuesday through Saturday in some areas, with little reprieve overnight, and the NWS Climate Prediction Center anticipates that temperatures will continue to be higher than normal through the summer.



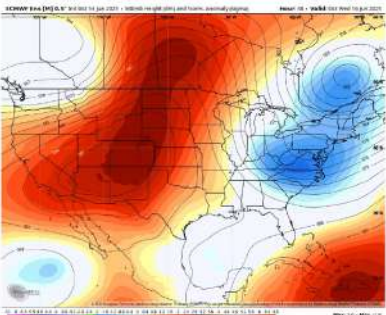
Why it matters: The heat will build in a region

that is experiencing a record drought, leading to dangerous fire weather conditions, high power demands, and causing water supplies to dwindle further. The heat itself could prove deadly.

**Details:** Heat warnings and advisories are in effect from the California coast to Utah, northward to the border with Canada and south to the U.S.-Mexico border as monthly as well as all-time high temperature records could be tied or broken through Saturday.

- Death Valley, Calif., which holds the U.S. record for hottest temperature ever recorded, could eclipse 120°F for several days, and reach 127°F, close to the June temperature record for that location.
- In addition to the Las Vegas record, statewide high-temperature records for Arizona (128°F), set in Lake Havasu City, and Nevada (125°F), set in Laughlin, could be in jeopardy.
- In Las Vegas, overnight low temperatures are not expected to drop below 85 to 90°F, posing a health threat to anyone without working air conditioning.

**Threat level:** The National Weather Service forecast office in Las Vegas is warning of significant threats to life and infrastructure from Monday through Saturday as the heat builds and refuses to relent.



Map showing projections of 500 millibar height anomalies across the U.S. on Wednesday, with the area in red depicting the heat dome over the Four Corners region. (Image: WeatherBell.)

- NWS forecasters note the last time heat of similar magnitude and duration occurred there was late June to early July 2013. “During that event, Southern Nevada saw nearly 30 fatalities and over 350 heat-related injuries as well as temporary power outages.” Heat is America’s biggest weather killer each year.
- In Sacramento, Calif., high temperatures could reach 110°F by Thursday as heat builds across the heart of the Golden States’ agricultural belt.
- Even downtown Los Angeles could see highs eclipse 100°F on Wednesday, as areas that are just a few miles inland from the cooling influence of the Pacific Ocean roast under the influence of a sprawling heat dome.
- With the drought and scorching heat, wildfire danger is elevated in many southwestern states, with large fires already burning in Arizona and California, for example

Map showing projections of 500 millibar height anomalies across the U.S. on Wednesday, with the area in red depicting the heat dome over the Four Corners region. Image: WeatherBell.



Of note: The heat will raise power demand at a time of decreased output at hydroelectric

plants. It will also dry soils further, expanding the area of “extreme” to “exceptional” drought, the worst categories.

- Already, Lake Mead, the nation’s largest reservoir by volume, has hit its lowest level on record, and this heat wave is likely to evaporate more water.
- Red flag warnings for hazardous fire weather are in effect in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, which are normally still covered with snow at this time of year.

**By the numbers:** For Phoenix, the NWS is projecting a 55-75% chance that the city would reach 115 degrees each day during the Tuesday through Friday time period.

**Context:** The heat wave and drought are working in tandem. Given the antecedent drought conditions, more solar radiation can go directly into heating the air, rather than evaporating moisture in soils, lakes, and rivers.



This boosts temperatures higher than they might otherwise be.

- In addition, one of the most robust conclusions of climate science is that heat waves are becoming more intense and longer-lasting as the climate warms overall.
- In recent years, there has also been a trend toward stubborn and sprawling areas of high pressure aloft, known as heat domes, that block storm systems and keep hot weather locked in place for days at a time.
- Such a weather pattern is currently in place across the West, and will be through the coming weekend.

NWS Storm Prediction Center  
@NWSSPC  
Jun 14

Fire weather in parts of the West will be more active the next two days. Critically dry and windy conditions are expected in parts of the Great Basin. Elevated fire weather will occur with sun-downer winds in southern California. Dry thun-

derstorms are possible in the Southwest.

“This type of heat is unusual for the month of June,” said Julie Malingowski, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service (NWS), adding that most heatwaves that have historically affected the western US occurred in July and August. The triple-digit heat is expected to extend from Tuesday through Saturday in some areas, with little reprieve overnight, and the NWS Climate Prediction Center anticipates that temperatures will continue to be higher than normal through the summer.



Lake Mead, Nevada, is seen in the distance. The state could see record heat in the coming days. (Photo/Ethan Miller/Getty Images)

The heatwave has elevated wildfire concerns in the west, which is already in the grips of a drought disaster. Significant fire potential has been declared across six states by the National Interagency Fire Center, and the heat has the potential to drive strong gusty winds exceeding 40mph through the parched landscapes along the Pacific coast.

“We are in the middle of a drought and the vegetation is stressed already,” Malingowski said, adding that fires start more easily and spread faster in hot, dry weather. Hundreds of thousands of acres have burned across the west and California has already passed last year – a record-breaking fire season when more than 4.2m acres burned – in terms of number of acres burned so far. (Courtesy axios.com)



Making Sense Of The Sky-High Lumber Prices

An Illustrated Guide – The Factors That Are Driving Up The Market  
Why Is Lumber Is So Expensive Right Now?

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

In 2020-2021, we’ve seen some truly bizarre shortages:

- Boba tea
- Chicken wings
- Toilet paper
- Bidets
- Couches
- Rental cars
- Pickle jars
- Boats
- Garden gnomes



But few of these shortages have caused the broader economic turmoil brought about by this guy.

Lumber is one of the most heavily utilized raw materials on Earth. Usually, there’s enough of it to go around and it’s pretty affordable.



Over the past year, the price of lumber in the US has shot up by as much as 377% — the fastest rise since the post-World War II housing boom.

Wood that usually goes for ~\$200-\$300 per 1k feet hit nearly \$1.7k in May.



That jump in price adds ~\$36k to the average price of a new single-family home.

It also tacks on ~\$13k to the market value of a new multifamily unit, which translates to an average rental increase of \$119/month.



Problems started mounting long before the pandemic.

In the years following the Great Recession (2007-2009), homebuilding — the single largest market for lumber — ground to a halt.

As a result, US lumber demand plummeted by 49% and 30+ large sawmills went out of business.



At the same time, Canada, which typically provides one-third of the US lumber supply, was plagued by a series of unfortunate events:

- 1 In the early 2000s, an infestation of bark-eating beetles pillaged 44m acres of forestland, killing 60% of British Columbia’s salable pine.
- 2 In 2017 and 2018, devastating wildfires destroyed another 6.2m acres of would-be lumber.



When the pandemic struck in early 2020, it started to look like history would repeat itself.

Lumber prices slumped, and investors took short positions on wood futures, betting that prices would continue to tank.

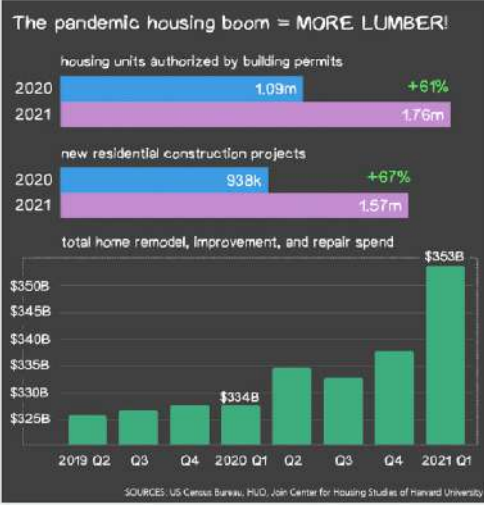
By April 2020, in anticipation of shrinking demand, sawmill operators had cut back output capacity by



But something strange happened: Demand for lumber didn’t go down.

In fact, it went... up.

Record-low home interest rates, stimulus cash, and more time at home led to a boom in home remodels and new construction, ratcheting up lumber demand.



Now, sawmills — the factories that process and cut logs — can’t keep up with the demand.

- **They can’t build more mills:** A state-of-the-art mill takes 2 years to complete and can cost \$100m+.
- **They can’t expand existing mills:** Today’s mills rely on microprocessors and heavy machinery, markets that face their own shortages.
- **They can’t hire fast enough:** A national labor shortage means fewer workers and truck drivers.

Analysts are split on when prices will return to normal.

Market data shows that previous lumber ‘bull’ cycles lasted 9 to 41 months. (We’re currently in month 11.)

For now, one thing is certain: If you’ve got a pile of old two-by-fours in your basement, you’re sitting on a gold mine.



Words and images: Zachary Crockett (@zccrockett) / The Hustle