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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Biden will press U.S. companies to pay 'acceptable' level of tax

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. President Joe Biden will sharpen arguments for his \$2 trillion-plus new spending proposal in a speech on Wednesday, challenging those who oppose his plan and the taxes that would be raised to pay for it.

Biden faces stiff opposition from Republicans, companies and even some in his own Democratic Party to key elements of the proposal he laid out a week ago, which must be approved by Congress to become a reality.

The president will attempt to put those opponents on the defensive in a speech where he will "challenge critics to explain why it's acceptable that 91 of the biggest corporations paid zero in federal taxes in 2019, or lay out which parts of this package they don't think is worthy," according to a White House official previewing Biden's remarks, who declined to be named.

Biden will deliver the speech at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, across the street from the White House.

He is planning a host of investments over eight

years in spending on roads and bridges, retrofitting homes, expanding broadband internet access, caring for the elderly, building up domestic manufacturers and building high-speed rail.

The largest share of funding for the proposal would come from a sharp increase in the corporate tax rate to 28%, from the 21% levy set by then-President Donald Trump's 2017 tax bill.

"There is not a shred of evidence to show that the cuts in 2017 increased growth or productivity," said Biden's Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo. "The fact of the matter is the corporate structure today is broken."

Biden's plan also raises taxes on companies' overseas earnings and introduces a new minimum tax on the profits they report to investors.

On Wednesday, the Treasury Department released details of the tax elements of the proposal, including plans to increase auditing and enforcement, that it said would raise about \$2.5 trillion over 15 years.



FILE PHOTO: U.S. President Joe Biden delivers remarks on the state of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) vaccinations from the State Dining Room at the White House in Washington, D.C., U.S., April 6, 2021. REUTERS/Kevin Lamarque



University of Houston Department of Modern and Classical Languages Online Graduate Certificate: Applied Linguistics in Teaching Chinese

The Graduate Certificate: Applied Linguistics in Teaching Chinese is a nine (9) credit post-baccalaureate program offered by the Chinese Studies Program, Department of Modern and Classical Languages (MCL). It is open to individuals interested in enhancing their knowledge and skills in Chinese language, culture, and teaching Chinese as a second language.

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Why Certificate?

- Given the growing importance of Chinese language in both education and social policy, many students find this formal recognition of their work in Chinese to be a valuable credential in both academic and non-academic job markets.
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- The University of Houston offers the nation's only

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How to apply?

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- Completion of the Graduate Certificate Application

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CHNS 6367: Sociolinguistic Fieldwork

CHNS 6371: Teaching Chinese as a 2nd language
CHNS 6372: Studies of Chinese language acquisition
CHNS 6373: Chinese second language curriculum design and instruction (an online course)

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

CORONAVIRUS DIARY 04/07/2021

ITC Community Resource Center Is Open

On Tuesday at noon we were here to welcome Congressman Al Green and many community leaders who came to the Southern News Group Building to celebrate the opening of the ITC Community Resource Center. This center will build a bridge between our people and government.

Today's ceremony is represented by many local leaders. They came from the Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino, Korean, Burmese, Indian, Pakistan, Japanese,



African and Latino communities. We are so proud that all of us belong to one big family.

This center will provide many information services including Disaster Assistance, Loans and Grants, small minority business development, tax information, immigration, workforce, veterans issues, senior care and child care.

At today's event, Congressman Green also issued a proclamation and brought an American flag to us. His remarks made me feel very moved and honored.

In my forty years media journey, this is a milestone of my career. I hope we can try our best to serve our community.



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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



A National Guard soldier looks on as people stand in line at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center Vaccination Center as Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announces the start of the statewide "Vaccinate NY" ad campaign to encourage all New Yorkers to get vaccinated, in New York City. Timothy A. Clary/Pool



A picture taken with a drone shows Palestinians burying the body of a man, who died after contracting the coronavirus, at a cemetery in the central Gaza Strip. REUTERS/Mohammed Salem



A service member of the Ukrainian armed forces uses binoculars while observing the area at fighting positions on the line of separation near the rebel-controlled city of Donetsk, Ukraine. REUTERS/Serhiy Takhmazov



A view of the fans and the stands during the second inning of the game between the Texas Rangers and the Toronto Blue Jays at Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas. Jerome Miron-USA

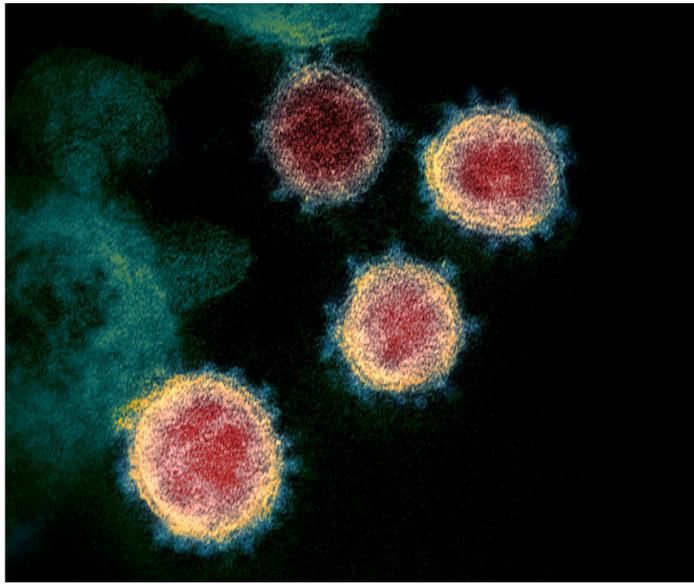


A woman reacts as restaurant owners scuffle with police as tensions rise over COVID-19 restrictions on businesses, in Rome, Italy. REUTERS/Yara Nardi



Activist Stephen Parlatto stands with a sign and BLM flag outside the Hennepin County Government Center on the seventh day in the trial of former police officer Derek Chauvin, who is facing murder charges in the death of George Floyd, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. REUTERS/Nicholas Pfsosi

'Double Mutant' COVID-19 Strain Emerges In California



Double Mutant Coronavirus Variant From India Found In California.

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

A new "double mutant" variant of the coronavirus has been discovered in California, with scientists worrying the strain could be more infectious.

The Stanford Clinical Virology Lab identified and confirmed one case of the variant — which first emerged in India — in the Bay Area, Stanford Health Care spokesperson Lisa Kim told the San Francisco Chronicle Sunday.

Seven other presumptive cases are also being screened by Stanford.

The emerging strain is called the "double mutant" because it carries two mutations in the virus that helps it latch onto cells, the news outlet reported.

The "double mutant" variant has been found in 20 percent of cases sequenced from India's hard-hit state of Maharashtra, where coronavirus cases have surged more than 50 percent in the past week, noted Dr. Peter Chin-Hong, an infectious disease ex-

pert at the University of California, San Francisco.



A new strain of COVID-19 has been found in California. (Photo REUTERS)

It is not yet known whether this new COVID-19 variant is more infectious or resistant to the coronavirus vaccine, but Chin-Hong said it "makes sense" that it could be more transmissible.

"It also makes sense that it will be more transmissible from a biological perspective as the two mutations act at the

receptor-binding domain of the virus, but there have been no official transmission studies to date," he told the San Francisco Chronicle.

One of the variant's mutations is similar to one found on the coronavirus variants first detected in Brazil and South Africa, and the other mutation is also found in a variant first detected in California, Chin-Hong added.



The variant, originally identified in India, carries two mutations in the virus that help it latch onto cells. (Photo EPA)

"This Indian variant contains two mutations in the same virus for the first time, previously seen on separate variants," the scientist said.

"Since we know that the domain affected is the part that the virus uses to enter the body, and that the California variant is already potentially more resistant to some vaccine antibodies, it seems to reason that there is a chance that the Indian variant may do that too," he explained.



It is not yet known whether this new COVID-19 variant is resistant to the coronavirus vaccine. (Photo GETTY IMAGES)

Several other COVID-19 variants have already been detected in the US — including the highly contagious UK variant, known as B.1.1.7, the South African variant called B.1.351, and the Brazilian variant known as P.1.

The UK variant accounts for 12,505 cases in the US, while the South Africa and the Brazil variants make up 323 and 224 cases in the country, respectively, according to the latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (Courtesy https://nypost.com/)

Related

Fully Vaccinated People Do Not Need Masks Or Physical Distancing: CDC

(CNN)The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Friday released a highly anticipated update to travel guidance for people who are fully vaccinated against Covid-19, eliminating some testing and quarantine recommendations.

Fully vaccinated people can travel at low risk to themselves, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said Friday, but travel still isn't recommended at this time because of rising numbers of coronavirus cases. The agency said that as long as coronavirus precautions are taken, including mask wearing, fully vaccinated people can travel within the United States without getting tested for Covid-19 before or self-quarantining after.



A podium with the logo for the CDC. (Kevin C. Cox/Getty Images)

For international travel, fully vaccinated people don't need a Covid-19 test prior to travel -- unless it is required by the destination -- and do not need to self-quarantine after returning to the United States. They should still have a negative Covid-19 test before boarding a flight to the US, and a follow up test three to five days after their return, the CDC noted.

The CDC considers someone fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the last required dose of the Covid-19 vaccine. The updated guidance does not apply to unvaccinated people. The CDC advises

anyone who hasn't been fully vaccinated to continue to avoid travel. (Courtesy bing.com)



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Scientists Around The World Are Now Fighting The Next Pandemic



By improving water sanitation, we can reduce the spread of antibiotic resistant bacteria. Image: Riccardo Mayer/Shutterstock.com

KEY POINTS

Children in developing countries are acquiring an anti-biotic-resistant infection due to their regular contact with poor sanitation and limited clean water.

This means, when they do fall ill, there is more than a 50% chance an antibiotic treatment will fail.

The practice known as WASH is vital to reduce the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

It is also crucial countries do more to treat sewage, improve sanitation and develop sufficient infrastructure.

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

If a two-year-old child living in poverty in India or Bangladesh gets sick with a common bacterial infection, there is more than a 50% chance an antibiotic treatment will fail. Somehow the child has acquired an antibiotic resistant infection — even to drugs to which they may never have been exposed. How? Unfortunately, this child also lives in a place with limited clean water and less waste management, bringing them into frequent contact with faecal matter. This means they are regularly exposed to millions of resistant genes and bacteria, including potentially untreatable superbugs. This sad story is shockingly common, especially in places where pollution is rampant and clean water is limited.

For many years, people believed antibiotic resistance in bacteria was primarily driven by imprudent use of antibiotics in clinical and veterinary settings. But growing evidence suggests that environmental factors may be of equal or greater importance to the spread of antibiotic resistance, especially in the de-



veloping world. This article focuses on antibiotic resistant bacteria, but drug resistance also occurs in types of other microorganisms — such as resistance in pathogenic viruses, fungi, and protozoa (called antimicrobial resistance or AMR). This means that our ability to treat all sorts of infectious disease is increasingly hampered by resistance, potentially including coronaviruses like SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19. Overall, use of antibiotics, antivirals, and antifungals clearly

must be reduced, but in most of the world, improving water, sanitation, and hygiene practice — a practice known as WASH — is also critically important. If we can ensure cleaner water and safer food everywhere, the spread of antibiotic resistant bacteria will be reduced across the environment, including within and between people and animals. As recent recommendations on AMR from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and World Health Organization (WHO) suggest that the "superbug problem" will not be solved by more prudent antibiotic use alone. It also requires global improvements in water quality, sanitation, and hygiene. Otherwise, the next pandemic might be worse than COVID-19.

Bacteria under stress

Over 70% of the world has no community wastewater treatment or even sewers; and most faecal matter, containing resistant genes and bacteria, goes directly into surface and groundwater, often via open drains. This means that people who live in places without faecal waste management are regularly exposed to antibiotic resistance in many ways. Exposure is even possible of people who may not have taken antibiotics, like our child in South Asia.



How antibiotic resistance spreads

Image: WHO Antibiotic resistance is everywhere, but it is not surprising that resistance is greatest in places with poor sanitation because factors other than use are important. For example, a fragmented civil infrastructure, political corruption, and a lack of centralized healthcare also play key roles. As an example of antibiotic resistance, the "superbug" gene, blaNDM-1, was first detected in India in 2007 (although it was probably present in other regional countries). But soon thereafter, it was found in a hospital patient in Sweden and then in Germany. It was ultimately detected in 2013 in Svalbard in the High Arctic. In parallel, variants of this gene

appeared locally, but have evolved as they move. Similar evolution has occurred as the COVID-19 virus has spread. Relative to antibiotic resistance, humans are not the only "travellers" that can carry resistance. Wildlife, such as migratory birds, can also acquire resistant bacteria and genes from contaminated water or soils and then fly great distances carrying resistance in their gut from places with poor water quality to places with good water quality. During travel, they defecate along their path, potentially planting resistance almost anywhere. The global trade of foods also facilitates spread of resistance from country to country and across the globe.

Resistant bacteria are not the only infectious agents that might be spread by environmental contamination. SARS-CoV-2 has been found in faeces and inactive virus debris found in sewage, but all evidence suggests water is not a major route of COVID-19 spread — although there are limited data from places with poor sanitation and each case differs. But there are common roots to disease spread — pollution, poor water quality, and inadequate hygiene. Using fewer antibiotics is critical to reducing resistance. However, without also providing safer sanitation and improved water quality at global scales, resistance will continue to increase, potentially creating the next pandemic. Such a combined approach is central to the new WHO/FAO/OIE recommendations on AMR.



Simple steps

It is clear we must use a holistic approach (what is now called "One Health") to reduce the spread of resistance across people, animals, and the environment. But how do we do this in a world that is so unequal? It is now accepted that clean water is a human right embedded in the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. But how can we achieve affordable "clean water for all" in a world where geopolitics often outweigh local needs and realities?

Simple is more sustainable. As an obvious example, we need to reduce open defecation in a cheap and socially acceptable manner. This is the best immediate solution in places with limited or un-

used sanitation infrastructure, such as rural India. Innovation is without doubt important, but it needs to be tailored to local realities to stand a chance of being sustained into the future. Strong leadership and governance is also critical. Antibiotic resistance is much lower in places with less corruption and strong governance. Resistance also is lower in places with greater public health expenditure, which implies social policy, community action, and local leadership can be as important as technical infrastructure.



Richer countries must work with poorer ones. But, actions against resistance should focus on local needs and plans because each country is different. We need to remember that resistance is everyone's problem and all countries have a role in solving the problem. This is evident from the COVID-19 pandemic, where some countries have displayed commendable cooperation. Richer countries should invest in helping to provide locally suitable waste management options for poorer ones — ones that can be maintained and sustained. This would have a more immediate impact than any "toilet of the future" technology. Antibiotic resistance will also impact on the fight against COVID-19. As an example, secondary bacterial infections are common in seriously ill patients with COVID-19, especially when admitted to an ICU. So if such pathogens are resistant to critical antibiotic therapies, they will not work and result in higher death rates. Regardless of context, improved water, sanitation, and hygiene must be the backbone of stemming the spread of AMR, including antibiotic resistance, to avoid the next pandemic. Some progress is being made in terms of global cooperation, but efforts are still too fragmented. Some countries are making progress, whereas others are not.

Resistance needs to be seen in a similar light to other global challenges — something that threatens human existence and the planet. As with addressing climate change, protecting biodiversity, or COVID-19, global cooperation is needed to reduce the evolution and spread of resistance. Cleaner water and improved hygiene are the key. If we do not work together now, we all will pay an even greater price in the future. (Courtesy weforum.org)