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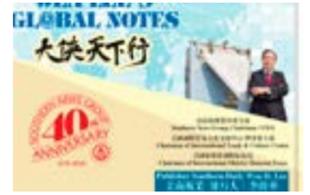
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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Biden's new goal: 70% of U.S. adults to get one vaccine dose by July 4

President Joe Biden on Tuesday announced a goal to have 70% of U.S. adults vaccinated with at least one COVID-19 shot by the July 4 Independence Day holiday, and urged young people in their 20s and 30s in particular to get inoculated.

The president, who has made fighting the coronavirus a key priority of his administration, had previously announced July 4 as a target date for when Americans can gather in small groups to signal a return to greater normalcy in the middle of the pandemic.

Biden's new goal comes as the administration faces increasing, though not unexpected, challenges of getting shots into the arms of people who are hesitant about the vaccine. The new target takes that reality into account.

"Now that we have the vaccine supply, we're focused on convincing even more Americans to show up and get the vaccine that is available to them," Biden told reporters at the White House while announcing his target. "If we succeed in this effort ... then Americans will have taken a serious step towards a return to normal."

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Biden's new goal includes having 160 million adults fully vaccinated by the Fourth of July.

An administration official told reporters that at this time 105 million Americans are fully vaccinated and more than 56% of U.S. adults, or 147 million people, have received at least one shot. (Graphic on global vaccines)

"There are a lot of younger people, especially those in their 20s and 30s who believe they don't need it. Well, I want to be absolutely clear: You do need to get vaccinated," Biden said.

The president's goal would result in roughly half of the entire U.S. population being vaccinated by early July.
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U.S. officials are gearing up to administer vaccines to adolescents once approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

To meet the president's target, the government will work to make the vaccine even more accessible by having thousands of pharmacies allow walk-in appointments and using the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) "to support more pop-up clinics," the White House said in a statement.

Pandemic-led decline of U.S. cities may be reversing

Fears that U.S. cities would be emptied by the coronavirus pandemic are giving way to potential signs of revival, according to a series of analyses that suggest any dislocation from the last year will prove temporary.

Some data suggest a return is already underway. Cellphone tracking firm Unacast had earlier noted that phone users were shifting their overnight locations out of New York, but now sees them coming back.

"New York is growing again," with the city adding a net 1,900 people in the first two months of 2021 versus a loss of 7,100 in the same two months of 2019 and the 110,000 estimated by the company to have left the city throughout 2020.

The turn may have begun last fall, when the usual seasonal jump in population centered around the arrival of college

students roughly matched that of 2019, fewer people left the city than the year before, and "there was a large influx from areas surrounding the city, perhaps the return of some who left ... at the height of the pandemic," the company wrote in a new research report.

Manhattan and the Bronx "demonstrate particular resilience," gaining 21,000 residents over the first two months of 2021. Three of New York City's five counties surveyed by the company lost population, though one, Kings County, saw the pace of loss ease compared to before the pandemic.

Similarly, Bank of America economists wrote last week that they "don't see evidence of a broad urban exodus," a conclusion that combined analysis of the company's own card spending data as well as a survey of other reports.

Expensive markets like New York City and San Francisco saw an already established trend of population loss accelerate, Bank of America analysts wrote. But they noted that people tended not to move far. And with home sales and rental prices having dropped in those locations, the large numbers of younger people who stayed with parents during the pandemic may now be ready to get places of their own.

"We believe both have the potential for some recovery in the near term. NYC and SF remain premier cities for young renters," the bank's analysts wrote. "With the share of young adults living at home reaching record highs in 2020, there could be some pent-up demand."

Those and other analyses downplaying any big shift in migration patterns due to the pandemic are just one indication that the long-term economic consequences of the past year may not be as deep as feared.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

CORONAVIRUS DIARY 05/04/2021



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Rich And Famous Ending Their Marriage

One of the world's richest couples, Bill and Melinda Gates, wrote on their Twitter accounts saying that, "After a great deal of thought and a lot of work on our relationship, we have made the decision to end our marriage. We have raised three incredible children and built a foundation that works all over the world to enable all people to lead healthy productive lives." The statement went on to say, "We continue to share a belief in that mission and will continue our work together at the foundation, but we no longer believe we can grow together as a couple in this next phase of our lives."



Bill, 65, and Melinda, 56, met at Microsoft which Bill Gates founded. In March of 2020, Bill Gates stepped down from the Board of Microsoft to devote his time on the foundation to address his philanthropic priorities.

With a net worth of \$137 billion, Gates has donated \$53.8 billion on a wide range of initiatives related to health and global

warming issues.

We are so surprised that this rich and public couple could not solve their problems and still wanted to end their relationship after twenty-seven years.

Bill Gates is an international figure. For all of our generation his contributions to our nation as well as to the world are so great that not too many people can compete with him.

We all hope he will continue to do his charity work to benefit the people around the globe.



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



A rescue worker stands in front of a car trapped under an overpass for a metro that partially collapsed with train cars on it at Olivos station in Mexico City. REUTERS/Luis Cortes



U.S. President Joe Biden gestures in a classroom during a visit at Yorktown Elementary School in Yorktown, Virginia. REUTERS/Jonathan Ernst



A man wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) cremates a body of a coronavirus victim at the crematory as the country recorded the highest daily increase in deaths since the pandemic began, in Kathmandu, Nepal. REUTERS/Navesh Chitrakar



Khalil Ferebee tends to his baby son Karter while standing with his brother Jha'rod Ferebee on a stage behind the coffin of their father Andrew Brown Jr. at the funeral in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. REUTERS/Jonathan Drake



Sally, a Havanese Pomeranian mix aged 5, sits at the bar with her owner Matt Friedlander, 39, of New York City at the White Horse Tavern (est. 1880) as restrictions eased on indoor drinking in bars, allowing seating at the bar, during the outbreak of the coronavirus in Manhattan, New York. REUTERS/Andrew Kelly



World War Two veteran Valentina Startseva, 96, accompanied by her daughter and granddaughter, watches a concert out of her balcony as she receives congratulations from members of the military-historical society "Krepost" (Fortress) on the upcoming...MORE

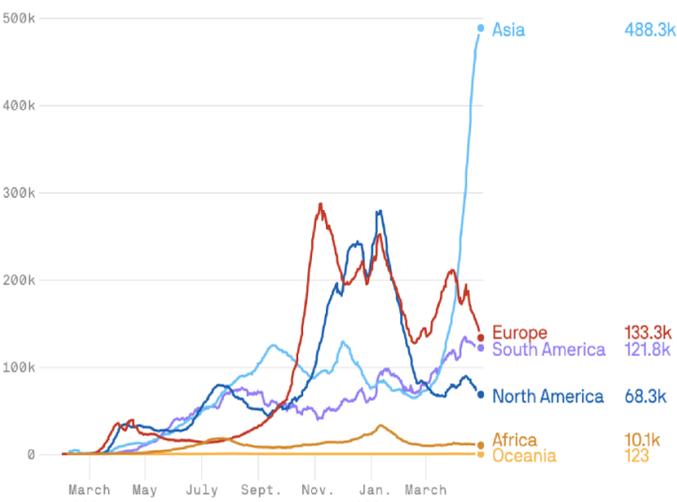
Southern DAILY Make Today Different

BUSINESS

The COVID-19 Pandemic, May 5, 2021

Daily reported COVID-19 cases, by continent

7-day average, Feb. 1, 2020, to May 1, 2021



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

A Turning Point

We seem to have arrived at a fork in the pandemic: Pockets of the rich world are beginning to move past COVID-19, while some less-fortunate countries are facing greater danger than ever.

The World Health Organization said this week that more cases had been recorded globally over the last two weeks than in the first six months of the pandemic, driven largely by an unprecedented surge in India and the ongoing onslaught in Brazil. India is now recording around 3,500 deaths per day, and the true rate could be two to five times that many, according to University of Michigan epidemiologist Bhramar Mukherjee.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has been accused of failing to prepare for a second wave while prioritizing a contentious regional election — which the ruling party lost — even as the wave was crashing down. It's now resisting calls for new national restrictions, though several states have already locked down.



Countries around the world continue to promise oxygen and other supplies. In the meantime, reports continue to emerge of hospitals in New Delhi and elsewhere running out.

In Europe, a fourth wave has begun to subside. Governments hope it's the last one they'll face, and they're preparing for life after the pandemic.

Chancellor Angela Merkel's government is planning to lift restrictions in the coming days for individuals who have been vaccinated.

That could lead temporarily to a two-tiered society within Germany, with the mainly older people who've been vaccinated no longer subject to curfews

and other measures.

The state of play: 28% of Germans have now had at least one dose, up from 12% one month ago as the EU continues to shake off its sluggish start to the vaccine rollout.

In the U.S., where 45% of the population has been vaccinated, demand is now a bigger issue than supply.



Cases and deaths both continue to fall, leading to hopes that the U.S. could now be on a trajectory similar to Israel's, where just 13 new cases were recorded on Saturday at a test positivity rate of 0.1%. In India, meanwhile, 9% of the population has had one dose. There will be a shortage of supply at least until July, Serum Institute of India CEO Adar Poonawalla told the FT.

Australia today made it a criminal offense for its citizens to return from India. A number of other countries have banned all travel from India but exempted their own citizens.

Meanwhile, the European Commission today proposed a plan to ease travel restrictions for tourists who have been fully vaccinated.

The recommendation could be adopted by the European Union's 27 member states as early as May 5, paving the way for the return of summer travel to one of the world's most popular tourism destinations, Axios' Zach Basu writes.



The bottom line: The world is opening up to those with access to vaccines. But that doesn't mean the pandemic is anywhere near over. (Courtesy axios.com)

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Vaccine Programs This Week – Houston

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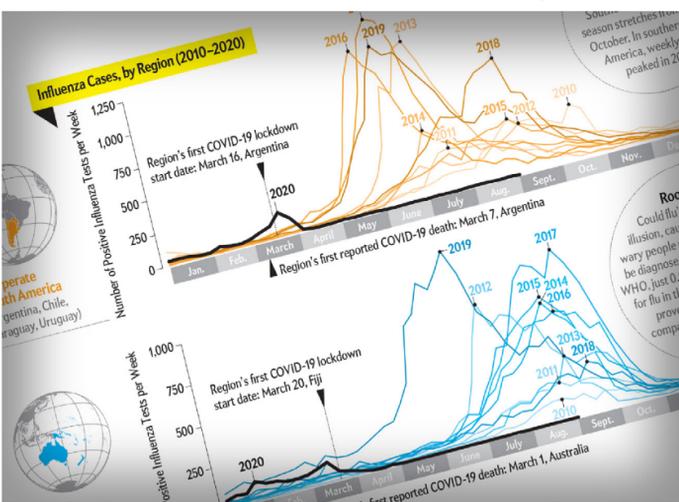
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Southern DAILY Make Today Different

COMMUNITY

Study: Weather Has A Larger Impact On COVID Spread Than Social Distancing



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

WASHINGTON — A lot of the blame for COVID-19's "second wave" has been pointed at people not following safety guidelines put out by health experts and government officials. A new report however, says don't blame people, blame the weather. Researchers from the University of Nicosia in Cyprus find hot weather and wind have a bigger impact on virus transmission rates than social distancing during a pandemic.

Their study concludes that two outbreaks in one year is a natural phenomenon during a massive outbreak. Temperature, humidity, and wind can help predict when a second wave will peak, which the researchers call "inevitable."

Science isn't using all of the science it should be

Though face masks, travel restrictions, and social distancing guidelines may help slow the number of new infections in the short term, study authors say the lack of climate data included in epidemiological models has left a glaring hole in the plans to de-

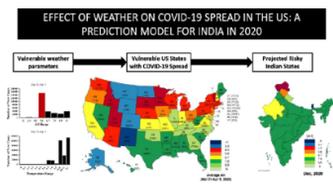
fend against COVID. Looking at Paris, New York City, and Rio de Janeiro, scientists discovered they could accurately predict the timing of the second outbreak in each city. Their research suggests two outbreaks per year is a natural weather-dependent phenomenon during any pandemic.

Typical models for predicting the behavior of an epidemic contain only two basic parameters, transmission and recovery rates. Professors Talib Dbouk and Dimitris Drikakis say these rates tend to be treated as constants, but that this is not actually the case. Since temperature, relative humidity, and wind speed all play a significant role, the researchers aimed to modify typical models to account for these climate conditions. They call their new weather-dependent variable the Airborne Infection Rate (AIR) index.

Different hemispheres will have different COVID waves

When applying the AIR index to mod-

els of major cities, the team discovered the behavior of the virus in Rio de Janeiro is markedly different from the behavior of COVID in Paris and New York.



Transmission rates of the coronavirus vary in the northern and southern hemispheres depending on the time of year, pointing to a weather dependence. (Credit: University of Nicosia)

This is due to seasonal variations in the northern and southern hemispheres, consistent with real data. The authors emphasize the importance of accounting for these seasonal variations when designing virus safety measures.

"We propose that epidemiological models must incorporate climate effects through the AIR index," says Prof. Drikakis in a media release by the American Institute of Physics. "National lockdowns or large-scale lockdowns should not be based on short-term prediction models that exclude the effects of weather seasonality."

"In pandemics, where massive and effective vaccination is not available, the government planning should be longer-term by considering weather effects and design the public health and safety guidelines accordingly," Prof. Dbouk adds. "This could help avoid reactive responses in terms of strict lockdowns that adversely affect all aspects of life and the global economy."

As temperatures rise and humidity falls, Drikakis and Dbouk expect another improvement in infection numbers. They note, however, that mask and distancing guidelines should continue to be followed with the appropriate weather-based modifications. The research group's previous work showed that droplets of saliva can travel up to 18 feet in just five seconds when unmasked people cough.

The new findings appear in the journal

Physics of Fluids. (Courtesy <https://www.studyfinds.org/>)

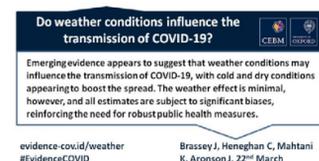
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Like The Flu, COVID-19 May

Turn Out to Be Seasonal

TUESDAY, Feb. 2, 2021 (HealthDay News) -- Like influenza, could COVID-19 evolve to wax and wane with the seasons? New research suggests it might.

Early in the pandemic, some experts suggested that SARS-CoV-2 -- the virus that causes COVID-19 -- may behave like many other coronaviruses that circulate more widely in fall and winter. To find out if that could be true, researchers analyzed COVID-19 data -- including cases, death rates, recoveries, testing rates and hospitalizations -- from 221 countries. The investigators found a strong association with temperature and latitude.



"One conclusion is that the disease may be seasonal, like the flu. This is very relevant to what we should expect from now on after the vaccine controls these first waves of COVID-19," said senior study author Gustavo Caetano-Anollés. He is a professor at the C.R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Similar viruses have seasonal increases in mutation rates, so the researchers looked for connections between mutations in SARS-CoV-2 and temperature, latitude and longitude.

"Our results suggest the virus is changing at its own pace, and mutations are affected by factors other than temperature or latitude. We don't know exactly what those factors are, but we can now say seasonal effects are independent of the genetic makeup of the virus," Caetano-Anollés said in a university news release. Further research is needed to learn more about how climate and different seasons may affect COVID-19 rates, the

team added.

The study authors suggested that people's immune systems may play a role. The immune system can be influenced by temperature and nutrition, including vitamin D, which plays an important role in immunity. With less sun exposure during the winter, most people don't make enough vitamin D.

"We know the flu is seasonal, and that we get a break during the summer. That gives us a chance to build the flu vaccine for the following fall," Caetano-Anollés said. "When we are still in the midst of a raging pandemic, that break is nonexistent. Perhaps learning how to boost our immune system could help combat the disease as we struggle to catch up with the ever-changing coronavirus." This study was published online Jan. 26 in the journal *Evolutionary Bioinformatics*. (Courtesy healthday via webmd.com)



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