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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



Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Lebanese soldiers stop pro-Palestinian protesters from crossing Lebanon-Israel border

BEIRUT, May 15 (Xinhua) -- Lebanese soldiers clashed on Saturday with pro-Palestinian demonstrators while trying to stop them from crossing a barbed wire fence between Lebanon and Israel, the National News Agency reported.

Hundreds of protesters took part on Saturday afternoon in demonstrations on Lebanon's borders with Israel in solidarity with the Palestinians in Gaza.

Meanwhile, Lebanese army soldiers were deployed in the area to prevent any escalations from Lebanon.

A day earlier, demonstrations resulted in the killing of one Lebanese citizen by gunshot as the Israeli army fired machine guns, smoke bombs and tear gas towards Lebanese protesters who tried to break into the Israeli side.

This has sparked anger among Lebanese authorities who asked for the intervention of the international community to put an end to Israeli aggression against the Lebanese and Palestinians



Smoke and flames rise from a tower building as it is destroyed by Israeli air strikes amid a flare-up of Israeli-Palestinian violence in Gaza City May 12, 2021. Israel launched its offensive after Hamas fired rockets at Jerusalem and Tel Aviv in retaliation for Israeli police clashes with Palestinians near al-Aqsa mosque in East Jerusalem during Ramadan. REUTERS/Ibraheem Abu Mustafa

California announces new plan to boost film industry

LOS ANGELES, May 14 (Xinhua) -- California Governor Gavin Newsom on Friday announced a new measure to attract productions to the Golden State by adding 30 million U.S. dollars to its film and television tax incentive program.

As part of the 100-billion-dollar "California Roars Back" plan, this move would boost the existing 330 million dollars tax credit program by nearly 10 percent, allowing the state to dole out a total of 360 million dollars annually to qualify film and television projects.

This new plan was applauded by the entertainment industry immediately. According to Los Angeles City's Economic and Workforce Department, this industry brought more than 30 billion dollars annually to California and supported more than 200,000 local jobs before the COVID-19 pandemic.

California Film Commission Executive Director Colleen Bell told the Hollywood Reporter, a leading entertainment news website, that thanks to the state's current film incentive program introduced in

2014, the state had welcomed nearly two dozen relocating television series from other regions since then.

other states and countries. The additional funding will enable us to grow that positive impact."



"Governor Newsom's announcement to expand the film and TV tax credit program is great news for California," said Bell. "The additional 30 million dollars in funding will be allocated to relocating TV series, which bring long-term, high-wage jobs and significant production spending to our state. To date, our tax credit program has welcomed 23 relocating series from

state of California," Newsom said at a press conference in Sacramento, capital city of the state, adding "that's what that 30 million dollars intends to do."

In recent days, Newsom announced a number of high-dollar initiatives, including an additional 12 billion dollars for homeless housing, 2 billion dollars to

Moreover, Newsom said this measure was designed to show the state's political gesture against those states who passed voter suppression legislation, like Georgia.

"This is an opportunity for those productions, TV and others, in places like Georgia, whose values don't necessarily always align with the production crews to consider coming back to the



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Israeli army says attack from Lebanon thwarted

JERUSALEM, May 15 (Xinhua) -- Israel's army said on Saturday that its troops thwarted an attempted attack near the border fence with Lebanon.

The incident took place late on Friday night, it said.

Israeli troops spotted several persons approaching the border fence and then digging into the ground and cutting the fence, according to a statement issued by the army.

"The soldiers operated to stop the suspects according to standard procedures, including by firing towards their legs," the statement read, adding that following the fire the suspects retreated back to Lebanon.

The army said that initial investigations and searches in the area indicated that the action had been planned in advance and the group was apparently armed with explosives.

They "acted in a way which indicates that they intended to infiltrate into Israeli territory" and carry out an attack in the area of Metula, a city in northern Israel.

The army said the Lebanese government should be held responsible for such incidents and warned "it will bear the consequences for any attempts to harm Israeli civilians."

According to the statement, Israeli troops "are prepared in the area and ready to operate with determination as necessary in response to any attempt to violate Israeli sovereignty."

The incident came a day after dozens of people from Lebanon briefly crossed the fence into Israeli territory. Israeli tanks fired toward them, injuring and killing a man.



Lebanese soldiers stop pro-Palestinian protesters from crossing Lebanon-Israel border

BEIRUT, May 15 (Xinhua) -- Lebanese soldiers clashed on Saturday with pro-Palestinian demonstrators while trying to stop them from crossing a barbed wire fence between Lebanon and Israel, the National News Agency reported.

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Editor's Choice



Smoke and flames rise during Israeli air strikes amid a flare-up of Israeli-Palestinian violence, in Gaza. REUTERS/Ibraheem Abu Mustafa



Activists are surrounded by police as they protest against the eviction of a family from their home in El Raval neighborhood in Barcelona, Spain. REUTERS/Nacho Doce



Demonstrators hold the flag of the Misak people while standing on the pedestal of the statue of South American independence leader Simon Bolivar during anti-government protests demanding the end to police violence, economic support as the coronavirus pandemic batters incomes, and the withdrawal of a health reform, in Bogota, Colombia. The writing on the mock coffin reads "The health reform wants us all in a box." REUTERS/Nathalia Angarita



Palestinians gather around the ruins of buildings which were destroyed in Israeli air strikes amid a flare-up of Israeli-Palestinian violence, in the northern Gaza Strip. REUTERS/Mohammed Salem



U.S. Representative Liz Cheney (R-WY) speaks to reporters after her removal as chair of the House Republican Conference on Capitol Hill in Washington. REUTERS/Jonathan Ernst



A couple fills up multiple 5 gallon gas tanks at a Wawa gas station, after a cyber-attack crippled the biggest fuel pipeline in the country, run by Colonial Pipeline, in Tampa, Florida. REUTERS/Octavio Jones

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

BUSINESS

Scientists Believe The Army's Vaccine May Combat Deadly Variants And Even Future Pandemics

Army's Own Vaccine That Could Fight COVID Variants Begins Human Trials



Soldiers prepare to administer the COVID-19 vaccine at Fort Hood, Texas, on Feb. 20, 2021. (Photo/Staff Sgt. Daniel Herman/Army)

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

As more than 100 million Americans were needed and inoculated against COVID-19 with doses produced by pharmaceutical powerhouses like Pfizer and Moderna, a scrappy team of scientists in an Army lab just outside the nation's capital quietly continued manipulating proteins, testing monkeys and working to conceive a vaccine of the future.

The product born of their experience, reason and labor was injected into its first human test subject on Tuesday.

"We want to win this battle, but we also want to win the long war," said Dr. Kayvon Modjarrad, who leads the vaccine effort as director of the emerging infectious diseases branch of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR) in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Once the virus was sequenced in January 2020, he and his then modest team of 10 strategized and took on a blistering 24/7 effort, whittling a selection of two dozen prototypes down to a single vaccine candidate within six months.

Over the last decade Modjarrad also led the Ar-

my's vaccine efforts for Ebola and the Zika virus and was principal investigator of its campaign against MERS, a disease itself caused by a coronavirus. And though WRAIR is the oldest biomedical research institute within the Department of Defense, the emerging infectious diseases branch is still young.



Dr. Kayvon Modjarrad sits at his desk adorned with a 3-D model of the vaccine he co-invented. Modjarrad is the director of the emerging infectious diseases branch of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR). (Photo Matt Seyler, ABC

News) "We're not Apple now -- we're Apple 40 years ago, in the garage," Modjarrad said with a laugh. Despite the frantic pace, Modjarrad -- who co-invented WRAIR's eventual vaccine candidate -- knew it wouldn't be the first to the public. "This one takes a little bit longer in designing and then manufacturing," he said. From the beginning his focus was on next-generation threats, ones that could be thriving in unknown bat caves as you read this sentence, waiting to make contact and proliferate inside humans. "Even though we got the (available vaccines) within a year, how many hundreds of thousands of people in the U.S. and how many millions of people globally lost their lives before the vaccine was even available?" Modjarrad asked ABC News' Bob Woodruff during an exclusive visit to the lab last week. "We want to get to a point where the vaccine is already out there -- maybe already in people's arms -- before the next variant, next stream, next species of coronavirus occurs."



The Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR), founded in 1893, is located in Silver Spring, Md. (Photo/Matt Seyler/ABC News)

The three vaccines already authorized for use in the U.S. work by feeding the body genetic instructions to create the spike protein that is found on the surface of the virus. Once the body creates the protein, the immune system is alerted and begins forming antibodies. It's a safe way of triggering a similar immune response as one a person would have after contracting the actual virus.

The WRAIR vaccine skips both the instruction and creation steps, bringing the already-formed spike protein straight into the arm along with an immune-boosting ad-

juvant compound, quickly starting the antibody response.

And unlike other protein-based vaccines being tested, the WRAIR candidate presents virus-looking nanoparticles, each with a consistent array of 24 spike proteins arranged in small bouquets of three protruding from a ferritin base.

"There's a lot of theories as to why something presented in this fashion gives such a good immune response, but in some ways you can see it looks like a virus as well," Modjarrad said. "So it has some properties that educate the immune response in a way that it gives you a very strong, but also a broad response."

Test results with thousands of mice and dozens of monkeys have been promising.



A researcher works on coronavirus vaccine development at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Silver Spring, Md., April 28, 2020. (photo/Matt Seyler/ABC News)

"We think (other) vaccines are probably going to be protective against new variants, but they might be decreased in their protection," Modjarrad said. "What we've seen with our vaccine so far in animals ... is that the vaccine is not decreased in effectiveness against those variants at all. And it is effective against other coronaviruses like SARS-1. So what we have developed now is starting to look like a pan-SARS vaccine ... and we're going to start testing everything in between."

If successful in clinical trials, WRAIR's vaccine could become common among the U.S. population, possibly as a booster for already-vaccinated people.

Being a military lab, practicality was a primary design concern, which could incidentally give their product global appeal. In particular, it is highly stable and doesn't require special freezing. "That means you can put it in a cooler on the back of a motorcycle in the Amazon or the Sahara or wherever, and that vaccine should still be OK," Modjarrad said.

But the "if" remains. Though the WRAIR scientists brim with confidence in conversation, they are soberly aware that their product has yet to be

proven in humans.

"They have some very early data to suggest in the laboratory that the immune response evoked by this vaccine will cover a variety of different strains," said Dr. William Schaffner, a professor of preventative medicine and infectious diseases at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. "Whether that translates actually into protection in people against the variety of strains -- that remains to be determined. Long journeys, first steps."



Cpt. Aaron Sanborn, RN, (far right), discusses the vaccination process with Francis Holinaty (left) during the first day of the vaccine entering clinical trials at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research's Clinical Trials Center, April 6, 2021. (Photo/Walter Reed Army Institute of Research)

On Tuesday, retired Army Col. Francis Holinaty stepped up to be the first to be injected in WRAIR's Phase 1 trial.

"Over my 30-year career I have served in many places around the world in many different operational settings, some more arduous than others, some more hazardous than others," Holinaty said. "And one day I'm on the Metro, and it's almost as if it was fate -- I just looked up and I saw a poster, and I saw Walter Reed, and it took me a while to process what this poster was saying. And when it dawned on me that they were trying to do a trial for the COVID-19, I saw this as another opportunity to just serve." Holinaty can't be sure whether he received a dose of the vaccine or a placebo, but said afterward that he felt fine. He wanted people to know that there are many ways to fight the pandemic.

"You don't have to be in the military, you don't have to be a first responder, but you can help all," he said. "And if you have a calling to help people this is just one of the ways you can do it." (Courtesy abcnews.go.com)

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

COMMUNITY

New Alief Neighborhood Center Represents Future Cultural Reality Of Area

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



The Alief Neighborhood Center combines three City of Houston departments (Library, Parks, & Health) to create a civic center at the heart of the redeveloped 37-acre urban park. Raised out of the floodplain, the building's elevated 'front porch' frames a space for the diverse community to come together, share ideas, and express an identity unique to Alief. The Center is a model for resilient design in a post-hurricane Harvey environment -- a 'Lilly-pad' for those seeking shelter from the storm.

BUILDING AWARDS- Rethinking The Future Awards 2020 First Award | Public Building (Concept) The \$52 million, 63,000-square-foot multi-purpose facility at 1903 Bellaire will combine a health clinic, community center and library into one space. The structure, which will sit in 37-acre Alief Park, will consolidate the Hennington-Alief Regional Library at 7979 South Kirkwood and the park's existing community center, both of which are aging. It also will replace the area's Women, Infants and Children Center, which today leases space at 12660 Beechnut. City council passed one item appropriating \$4.8 million for contractor EYP Inc. to begin construction on the new center, and another item giving Manhattan Construction \$100,000 for construction management services.

The 70,000sf 2-story new building is elevated over a parking area providing convenient access to the building programs directly above. Health Department programs provided include W.I.C. (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), DAWN (Diabetes

Awareness Network) that provides support for a variety of chronic illnesses, and a Senior Center. The Parks Department programs include a full-size competition gymnasium with a perimeter elevated walking track above, a community fitness center and spaces to support youth after-school and summer programs.



The library, located on the second floor, and accessed through a grand 'stair-a-torium' in the lobby contains light-filled stack-space and reading

areas with expansive views both to the park to the south and to the existing grove of preserved trees on the north. Directly adjacent to the library, HPL's technology-rich TechLINK youth maker-doer program contains spaces for collaboration, the 'Tiny Techs' children's area, music recording studio, virtual reality stations, photo/video lab, and a maker space.

Site amenities include a competition soccer field, two full-size practice soccer fields, two futsal courts (fast-paced soccer played on a hard-surfaced smaller court) baseball field, skate park, tennis courts, children's playground, outdoor swimming pool facility, community gardens, a marketplace venue, and outdoor event space areas. The Alief Neighborhood Center is

scheduled to open in early 2022.

The Mission Of The Alief Neighborhood Center



To Foster A Culture Of Health



To Create A Heart For Civic Engagement



All In A Spirit Of Shared Collaboration



With The Biggest Front Porch In Texas!

Related

Community Resource Center Opens

Sponsored by the ITC Community Empowerment Organization with the collaboration of the SEONE Corporation, the Community Resource Center opens its door on Tuesday, April 6, 2021, at the Southern News Group building. The mission of the Community Resource Center is to serve as a "one stop-shop" for the underserved minority population in the southwest area of Houston. The Center will provide members of the community with information that will empower them to improve their quality of life and to also serve as a way for participants to access the rich pool of resources avail-

able to them.



Southern News Group, Houston, Texas

Members of the community who have questions about any of the variety of issues the Center will address are encouraged to schedule interviews with the Center. The Center will link the person with a professional who can best address their needs.



The areas the Center will address include disaster assistance, loans and grants, small business development, tax information, immigration, legal issues, workforce, housing and renting, veterans issues, medical, healthcare service, education, skills development, children and child welfare and city services. The Center's services will be led by senior educator, Dr. Tina Agosa and many other assistants.

