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Southern DAILY

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Southern Daily News is published by Southern News Group Daily

Sunday, July 18 2021

U.S rebuffs Haiti troops request after president's assassination

WASHINGTON/PORT-AU-PRINCE, July 9 (Reuters) - The United States on Friday rebuffed Haiti's request for troops to help secure key infrastructure after the assassination of President Jovenel Moise by suspected foreign mercenaries, even as it pledged to help with the investigation.

The killing of Moise by a squad of gunmen in the early hours of Wednesday morning at his home in Port-au-Prince pitched Haiti deeper into a political crisis which may worsen growing hunger, gang violence and a COVID-19 outbreak. read more

Haitian Elections Minister Mathias Pierre said a request for U.S. security assistance was raised in a conversation between interim Prime Minister Claude Joseph and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Wednesday. Haiti also made a request for forces to the United Nations Security Council, Pierre said.

But a senior U.S. administration official said there were "no plans to provide U.S. military assistance at this time."

A letter from Joseph's office to the U.S. embassy in Haiti, dated Wednesday and reviewed by Reuters, requested the dispatch of troops to support the national police in reestablishing security and protecting key infrastructure across the country following Moise's assassination.

A similar letter, also dated Wednesday and seen by Reuters, was sent to the U.N. office in Haiti.

"We were in a situation where we believed that infrastructure of the country - the port, airport and energy infrastructure - might be a target," Pierre told Reuters.

Another aim of the request for security reinforcements would be to make it possible to go ahead with scheduled presidential and legislative elections on Sept. 26, Pierre said.

The U.N. political mission in Haiti received the letter and it was being examined, said Jose Luis Diaz, spokesman for the U.N. Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs.

"The dispatch of troops under any circumstances would be a matter for the (15-member) Security Council to decide," he said.

RIDDLED WITH BULLETS



The United States and Colombia said they would send law enforcement and intelligence officials to assist Haiti after a number of their nationals were arrested for Moise's murder.

Police in Haiti said the assassination was carried out by a commando unit of 26 Colombian and two Haitian-American mercenaries. The two Haitian-Americans were identified as James Solages, 35, and Joseph Vincent, 55, both from Florida.

Seventeen of the men were captured - including Solages and Vincent - after a gun battle with Haitian authorities in Petionville, the hillside suburb of the capital Port-au-Prince where Moise resided.

Three others were killed and eight remain at large, according to Haitian police. Authorities are hunting for the masterminds of the operation, they said.

A judge investigating the case told Reuters that Moise was found lying on his back on the floor of his bedroom. The front door of the residence had been forced open, while other rooms were ransacked.

"His body was riddled with bullets," Petionville tribunal judge Carl Henry Destin said. "There was a lot of blood around the corpse and on the staircase."

Haitian officials have not given a motive for Moise's killing or explained how the assassins got past his security detail. He had faced mass protests against his rule since taking office in 2017 - first over corruption allegations and his management of the economy, then over his increasing grip on power.

Moise himself had talked of dark forces at play behind the unrest: fellow politicians and corrupt oligarchs who felt his attempts to clean up government contracts and to reform Haitian politics were against their interests.

COMMANDO UNIT

The United States on Thursday pledged to send senior officials from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Homeland Security to Haiti as soon as possible to assess the situation and see how best they can assist, the White House said.

A State Department spokesperson said: "We are aware of the arrest of two U.S. citizens in Haiti and are monitoring the situation closely."

The head of Colombia's national intelligence directorate and the intelligence director for the national police will travel to Haiti with Interpol to help with investigations, Colombian President Ivan Duque said on Friday.

Investigators in Colombia discovered that 17 of the suspects had retired from Colombia's army between 2018 and 2020, armed forces commander General Luis Fernando Navarro told journalists on Friday.

Jorge Luis Vargas, director of Colombia's national police, said initial investigations had shown that 11 Colombian suspects had traveled to Haiti via the resort city of Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic, which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti.

Two others traveled by air to Panama, before flying to Dominican capital Santo Domingo and then Port-au-Prince, Vargas said.



美南報業電視傳媒集團
SOUTHERN NEWS GROUP

SOUTHERN CHINESE DAILY NEWS

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印刷設計 國際貿易中心

美南新聞



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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

CORONAVIRUS DIARY 07/17/2021



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God Sent Him To Become The New President

A Haitian doctor, Emmanuel Sanon, who might have managed to set off an ambitious plot to become the new leader of Haiti has been arrested.

Dr. Sanon holds degrees not just in medicine, but also in theology. He felt he had a divine calling. He said he was sent by God to replace President Moise of Haiti.

President Biden said in

a statement that the people of Haiti deserve peace and security and all political leaders need to come together for the good of the country.

Sanon is in custody in Haiti along with 18 other men. Many of them are Colombian military veterans along with two American citizens.

American officials were helping the Haitian government as it tried



to unravel the plot.

Currently the country also has two rival prime ministers and a parliament that is not functioning.

The White House was still reviewing whether or not to send troops to Haiti to help stabilize the country.

It is very regretful that we have so many problems right in our own backyard. In the last few decades we wanted other countries to select a democratic system to lead their countries such as Haiti. But if we look at today's situation, the people are still suffering under their governments and their

living standards never get any better.

The world now is really in chaos. Look at South Africa, the South China Sea and the Middle East. World leaders need to find the ways to solve their disputes. We need peace for all the nations.



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



Firefighters spray water from a fire train to hot spots along the tracks over Rock Creek Bridge as the Dixie Fire grows in Plumas National Forest, California. REUTERS/David Swanson



Lebanese army members take cover behind shields as they deploy during a protest after Lebanese Prime Minister-Designate Saad al-Hariri abandoned his effort to form a new government, in Beirut, Lebanon. REUTERS/Mohamed Azakir



A healthcare worker administers a Johnson & Johnson's coronavirus vaccine to a woman during a vaccination rollout for homeless at a vaccination centre in Valencia, Spain. REUTERS/Eva Manez



A child looks on as water floods through a fence, in Wessum, Netherlands. REUTERS/Eva Plevier



A worker rests while preparing a grave at a burial area provided by the government for coronavirus victims as the case surges, in Bekasi, on the outskirts of Jakarta, Indonesia. REUTERS/Willy Kurniawan



Three women stand on a sidewalk in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. REUTERS/Ricardo Arduengo

J&J Vaccine Gets Green Light From Top Agencies Following Thorough Safety Review
FDA And CDC Lift Pause On Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) COVID-19 Vaccine Use



Key Point
 Agencies Underscore Confidence in Vaccine's Safety and Effectiveness Following Data Assessment; Available Data Suggest Potential Blood Clots Are Very Rare Events

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

Following a thorough safety review, including two meetings of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have determined that the recommended pause regarding the use of the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) COVID-19 Vaccine in the U.S. should be lifted and use of the vaccine should resume.

The pause was recommended after reports of six cases of a rare and severe type of blood clot in individuals following administration of the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine. During the pause, medical and scientific teams at the FDA and CDC examined available data to assess the risk of thrombosis involving the cerebral venous sinuses, or CVST (large blood vessels in the brain), and other sites in the body (including but not limited to the large blood vessels of the abdomen and the veins of the legs) along with thrombocytopenia, or low blood

platelet counts. The teams at FDA and CDC also conducted extensive outreach to providers and clinicians to ensure they were made aware of the potential for these adverse events and could properly manage and recognize these events due to the unique treatment required for these blood clots and low platelets, also known as thrombosis-thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS).



Shortly after the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) made its

recommendation about lifting the pause for the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) COVID-19 vaccine, the FDA and CDC determined that use of the vaccine should resume.

The two agencies have determined the following:

- Use of the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine should be resumed in the United States.
 - The FDA and CDC have confidence that this vaccine is safe and effective in preventing COVID-19.
 - The FDA has determined that the available data show that the vaccine's known and potential benefits outweigh its known and potential risks in individuals 18 years of age and older.
 - At this time, the available data suggest that the chance of TTS occurring is very low, but the FDA and CDC will remain vigilant in continuing to investigate this risk.
 - Health care providers administering the vaccine and vaccine recipients or caregivers should review the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers Administering Vaccine (Vaccination Providers) and Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers, which have been revised to include information about the risk of this syndrome, which has occurred in a very small number of people who have received the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine.
- CDC's independent Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices met today to discuss the latest data on TTS, hearing from the vaccine manufacturer Janssen and the COVID-19 Vaccine Safety Technical (VaST) Subgroup, as well as a risk benefit analysis. ACIP is committed to be vigilant and responsive to additional information that could impact the risk benefit analysis of any of these vaccines.



Vaccine safety monitoring will continue and any new information about TTS will be brought to ACIP as needed. "Safety is our top priority. This pause was

an example of our extensive safety monitoring working as they were designed to work—identifying even these small number of cases. We've lifted the pause based on the FDA and CDC's review of all available data and in consultation with medical experts and based on recommendations from the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. We have concluded that the known and potential benefits of the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine outweigh its known and potential risks in individuals 18 years of age and older. We are confident that this vaccine continues to meet our standards for safety, effectiveness and quality. We recommend people with questions about which vaccine is right for them have those discussions with their health care provider," said Janet Woodcock, M.D., Acting FDA Commissioner. "Above all else, health and safety are at the forefront of our decisions," said CDC Director Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky. "Our vaccine safety systems are working. We identified exceptionally rare events – out of millions of doses of the Janssen COVID-19 administered – and we paused to examine them more carefully. As we always do, we will continue to watch all signals closely as more Americans are vaccinated. I continue to be encouraged by the growing body of real-world evidence that the authorized COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, and they protect people from disease, hospitalization, and death. I urge anyone with questions about the COVID-19 vaccines to speak with their healthcare provider or local public health department."



Assessment of Available Data

Medical and scientific teams at the FDA and CDC reviewed several sources of information and data related to the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine to reach today's decision. Specifically, the agencies assessed reports submitted to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS), reviewed the medical litera-

ture and considered the information from global regulatory partners about thrombosis with thrombocytopenia that have been reported following use of a similar, yet not identical, COVID-19 vaccine using a virus from the adenovirus family that has been modified to contain the gene for making a protein from SARS-CoV-2.

Update on Adverse Events

On April 13, the FDA and CDC announced that, out of more than 6.8 million doses administered, six reports of a rare and severe type of blood clot combined with low blood platelet levels occurring in people after receiving the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine had been reported to VAERS. In these cases, a type of blood clot called cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST) was seen in combination with low levels of blood platelets (thrombocytopenia).



Today, the agencies can confirm that a total of 15 cases of TTS have been reported to VAERS, including the original six reported cases. All of these cases occurred in women between the ages of 18 and 59, with a median age of 37 years. Reports indicated symptom onset between 6 and 15 days after vaccination.

Monitoring for Safety Will Continue

The surveillance systems that are in place to monitor the safety of COVID-19 vaccines authorized for emergency use are working, as demonstrated by both agencies' quick work to identify and investigate these rare, but serious adverse events. The FDA and CDC will continue with these efforts to closely monitor the safety of these vaccines.

Reports of adverse events following vaccination can be made to the *Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System. (Courtesy <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/>)

Suicide Is The Leading Cause Of Death Among Asian American Young Adults And The Only Racial Group With This Distinction. Why?



Death by suicide is the number one cause of death for young adult Asian Americans. (Photo/Kelvin Murray/Getty Images)

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

Racially motivated violence looks like the mass shootings that killed Xiaojie Tan, Daoyou Feng, Chung Park, Hyun Grant and Suncha Kim in Atlanta on March 16, 2021. Racially motivated violence also looks like suicide, which is defined as a deliberate act of self-directed violence in order to cause injury to oneself that results in death. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States. When broken down by race, suicide is the first leading cause of death among Asian American young adults age 15-24. This is true of no other racial group in this age range in America. Despite this disparity, very little attention is paid by society and by gatekeeping institutions like academe and private and public funding agencies as to what causes suicidal behavior among racial minorities like Asian Americans. There is not enough research on how to prevent suicide among Asian Americans in particular. What makes this research more challenging to do is that Asian Americans are also the least likely racial group to

seek and utilize mental health services. I am a doctoral candidate studying public health, with a focus on minority mental health disparities research. Here's what I think is important to know about how violence, suicide and disparities all connect to affect Asian American lives.



Determining who might be at risk for death by suicide is a difficult task. (Photo/MStudioImages/via Getty Images)

Beyond risk factors

When an Asian American death occurs by suicide, it is not simply because that person experienced risk factors. Sure, the evidence suggests that the risk of a suicide attempt increases if there are easily accessible means such as guns in the home or if the person knows someone

who died by suicide. But is that the full picture for Asian Americans, or even for other racial minorities? The truth is, the people who study suicide are still trying to come up with a profile of who is "at risk" in order to precisely predict, and ultimately prevent, suicidal behavior and death. Today, many research dollars go into the development of computer algorithms and genetic biomarkers to precisely calculate who is at risk. Will these methods do justice to the racialized experience of being Asian American in the U.S.?

Only one national study targeting Asian American mental health

So the question now becomes: How can research scientists better understand and develop suicide prevention efforts that precisely address racial minorities like Asian Americans? To answer this question, there must first be research on Asian Americans to study. Unfortunately, the first, only and last study that assesses national epidemiological prevalence estimates of mental disorders in the Asian American community occurred and was published in the early 2000s, nearly two decades ago. Since these data were collected, the U.S. Asian population grew 72% by 2015, making Asians the fastest-growing racial or ethnic group, surpassing Hispanics. In my view, suicide among Asian Americans is a seriously unaddressed problem that could become endemic in a rapidly growing community with little to no direction on how to stop it



Comic Anna Akana discusses stigma about mental health issues in Asian Americans.

Centuries of Stigma

What if there was a way to scientifically account for racism as the fundamental cause of health disparities? The answer lies in understanding stigma. Stigmatized identity is arguably a universal phenomenon. People who are stigma-

tized are unwanted by society, negatively stereotyped, rejected and excluded, and ultimately othered. Asian Americans have experienced this kind of stigmatization institutionally since the early years of modern America as racial categorizations began to solidify.

As America continues to racialize Asian Americans, it continues a legacy of structural violence and historical trauma. This means that anti-Asian violence exists within the very fabric of American society. It is this societal oppression and violence that becomes internalized into self-hatred, self-harm and ultimately the self-directed violence that is suicide.

When it comes to being Asian in America, though, the story is incomplete with looking only at race. There are plenty of violently oppressive systems that Asian Americans face that pile on the risk of self-directed violence.



These are intersecting in nature. It is the intersectionality, or cross-sections, of Asian American identity that must be closely investigated to uncover insights into suicide prevention for this incredibly diverse community.

Being an immigrant and experiencing xenophobia, for example, is a dominant experience for many Asian Americans. Although many have lived in the United States for several generations, Asian Americans do account for a large portion of today's adult second generation. Second-generation immigrants are people who are native-born citizens in the United States and have at least one parent who is foreign-born.

What makes this important to know?

Current trends indicate that the U.S. is explosively growing into an immigrant-rich nation. More than 36% of all Americans are projected to be of immigrant origin

– that's first- or second-generation – by 2050. By that time, the overwhelming majority – 93% – of the country's working-age population will be of immigrant origin, too. Here's the problem: Second-generation immigrants are considered an at-risk group for suicidal behavior and death by researchers across the world. Researchers aren't fully sure why yet, and that's why this research is so timely.



Signs of suicidal thinking are hard to know. Everyday actions may not change at all. (Photo/Sean Justice/Getty Images)

A complicated and time-consuming issue

Research takes decades to implement. It also takes decades to figure out the problem and how to address it. The public health scientists who work on disparities research are aware of the complex problems facing minority populations like Asian Americans. If there were an intervention to end racism and xenophobia, perhaps many Asian American lives would be saved both from homicide and suicide.

The reality is that white supremacy runs so deep in America that even reversing racism would not undo the disparities in health outcomes such as suicide. This is because assimilation is "traumagenic." That means the traumatic exposures of racist and xenophobic violence and discrimination hold the power to disrupt psychological and physiological functioning and alter genetic code for generations to come. Race-based traumatic stress holds the power to predispose entire populations, entire communities like Asian Americans, to self-directed violence.

In my view, what is left to do is to work to change the norms of inclusion. It won't take years of research to do that. Just start now. Act locally. That's a first step. (Courtesy <https://theconversion.com/>)