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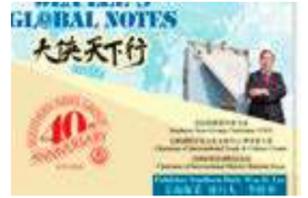
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John Robbins 281-965-6390
Jun Gai 281-498-4310

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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Climate summit sees new pledges on cutting methane, saving forests

GLASGOW, Nov 2 (Reuters) - Leaders at the COP26 global climate conference pledged on Tuesday to stop deforestation by the end of the decade and slash emissions of the potent greenhouse gas methane to help slow climate change.

The second day of the two-week summit in Glasgow, Scotland also saw some overdue moves by wealthy nations to provide long-promised financial help for the developing countries worst hit by global warming.

More than 100 countries joined a U.S.- and EU-led effort to cut emissions of methane 30% by 2030 from 2020 levels, potentially a step in stemming rising temperatures and averting even greater damage from intensified heatwaves, droughts, storms and flooding.

Leaders of developing countries most at risk from the effects of climate change told delegates the stakes could not be higher.

“Let’s work for the survival of ours and all species. Let’s not choose extinction,” said Trinidad and Tobago’s Prime Minister Keith Rowley.

The Global Methane Pledge, launched on Tuesday after being announced in September with just a few signatories, now covers countries representing nearly half of global methane emissions and 70% of global GDP, U.S. President Joe Biden said.

Methane is more short-lived in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide but 80 times more potent in warming the planet. Cutting emissions of the gas, estimated to have accounted for 30% of global warming since pre-industrial times, is one of the most effective ways of slowing climate change.

Among the signatories is Brazil - one of the five biggest emitters of methane, generated in cows’ digestive systems, in landfill waste and in oil and gas production. Three others - China, Russia and India - have not signed up, while Australia has said it will not back the pledge.

The United States also unveiled its own domestic proposal to crack down on methane emissions with a focus on the oil and gas sector, where leaky infrastructure allows methane to escape into the atmo-



sphere. read more

COP26 aims to keep alive a receding target of capping global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels, to avert still greater damage than has already been caused by climate change.

LOST FORESTS

More than 100 national leaders also signed a promise to halt the destruction of the world’s forests which absorb roughly 30% of carbon dioxide emissions, according to the nonprofit World Resources Institute.

In 2020, the world lost 258,000 sq km (100,000 sq miles) of forest - an area larger than the United Kingdom, according to WRI’s Global Forest Watch. The conservation charity WWF estimates that 27 football fields of forest are lost every minute.

The pledge to halt and reverse deforestation and land degradation by the end of the decade is underpinned by \$19 billion in public and private funds to be invested in protecting and restoring forests. read more

“Let’s end this great global chainsaw

massacre by making conservation do what we know it can do and deliver long-term sustainable jobs and growth as well,” British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said.

The signatories include Brazil, which has carried out soaring deforestation under right-wing President Jair Bolsonaro, Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Together they account for 85% of the world’s forests.

Under the agreement, 12 countries pledged to provide \$12 billion of public funding between 2021 and 2025 for developing countries to restore degraded land and tackle wildfires.

At least \$7.2 billion will come from private sector investors representing \$8.7 trillion in assets under management, who also pledged to stop investing in activities linked to deforestation such as cattle, palm oil and soybean farming and pulp production.

“DOUBLE STANDARDS”

The funding may help reduce mistrust among developing countries caused by the failure of wealthy na-

tions to deliver on a 2009 promise to stump up \$100 billion per year by 2020 to help them tackle climate change.

This mistrust is one of the main obstacles to climate progress, making some developing countries reluctant to embrace steep emission cuts.

“We see double standards creeping into our thinking, whereby those who have already benefited from carbon-driven economies would like to prevent emerging economies lay similar foundations for their political stability, social development and economic prosperity,” said Suriname President Chan Santokhi.

On Tuesday, Japan said it would offer up to \$10 billion over five years in additional assistance to support decarbonisation in Asia.

U.S. climate envoy John Kerry said this could leverage another \$8 billion from the World Bank and other sources, probably allowing the \$100 billion threshold of climate financing to be reached by 2022, rather than 2023 as previously expected.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

CORONAVIRUS DIARY

11/02/2021

Families Separated Under Trump Policy Will Get Paid

The Biden Administration is considering payment to migrants who were separated from their children during the Trump administration's zero tolerance policy.

In April 2018, the policy that led to family separations and removed the children from their parents who crossed the border with their families and put the adults into custody would now, under Biden

's plan, compensate the families. Former Attorney General Jeff Sessions was the driving force behind the zero tolerance policy.

The ACLU was the organization that sued the government on behalf of the families seeking damages in the amount close to \$450,000 per person which could amount to one million dollars per family. But the final decision has not been



made yet.

Former Homeland Security Secretary Chad Wolf slammed the proposal as "insulting to our taxpayers."

The Biden

Administration found that 3,913 children were separated from their families under the Trump administration's zero tolerance policy.

We totally sympathize with the families, but paying one million

dollars to them is just unbelievable.

Today the country is also facing several other difficulties in many areas. We really need to consider the whole picture and the future of our nation.



Wea H. Lee
Wealee@scdaily.com

Chairman of International District Houston Texas

Publisher Southern Daily Wea H. Lee

Southern News Group Chairman / CEO
Chairman of International Trade & Culture Center
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Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



Runners and riders compete in race 6 during the annual one-day Laytown races held on the beach under official horse racing turf club rules, which has returned after being cancelled for the past two years due to the coronavirus, in Laytown, Ireland. REUTERS/Clodagh Kilcoyne



U.S. President Joe Biden attends the opening session of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland. Erin Schaff/Pool



A professional skydiver flies over pyramids during the international event 'Jump Like a Pharaoh' in Giza, Egypt. REUTERS/Mohamed Abd El Ghany



Britain's Prince William (not pictured) and Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge celebrate the Scouts #PromiseToThePlanet campaign during a visit to 105th Glasgow Scouts, at the Alexandra Sports Hub, on the sidelines of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotlan. Victoria Stewart/Pool



A Red Rebellion activist participates in a protest at Glasgow Central Station during the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland. REUTERS/Lee Smith



British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres in conversation during arrivals for the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland. Christopher Furlong/Pool

Home Testing Investment Is Part Of Biden's Initiative To Quadruple The Number Of Tests Available To Americans By December

White House Announces \$1 Billion Purchase Of Rapid, At-Home Coronavirus Tests



A rapid coronavirus test is administered in Berlin this spring. (Christian Mang/Reuters)

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

The White House announced Wednesday that it will buy \$1 billion worth of rapid, at-home coronavirus tests to address ongoing shortages, a plan hailed by public health experts who called the move long overdue. The actions will quadruple the number of tests available to Americans by December, according to Jeff Zients, the White House coronavirus response coordinator. The news follows Monday's decision by the Food and Drug Administration to allow the sale of an antigen test from U.S.-based Acon Laboratories. The White House expects that decision and the purchase of the additional tests will increase the number of at-home tests to 200 million per month by December. "This is a big deal," said Scott Becker, chief executive of the Association of Public Health Laboratories, who said the spotty availability of rapid tests had hampered efforts to track and combat the surge of coronavirus cases driven by the highly transmissible delta variant. "The White House is beginning to take testing as seriously as they've taken vaccinations." The administration is also aiming to increase free testing by doubling President Biden's earlier commitment to expand the number of pharmacies in the federal government's free testing program to 20,000, Zients said at a news briefing Wednesday. Biden last month

announced a coronavirus response plan that envisioned a significant expansion of testing capacity.



The United States has lagged several European and Asian countries in testing for much of the pandemic, with many Americans reporting in recent months that they have struggled to get testing appointments or to be able to purchase at-home tests. While the FDA has authorized several at-home tests, public health experts criticized the agency for not moving faster to greenlight more of them to expedite the tests' availability. "These tests are cheap to make, and there's a lot of demand for it out there," said Ashish Jha, dean of the Brown University School of Public Health. "The reason the market hasn't worked is because the FDA has made it very difficult for these tests to get out into the marketplace."

Jeff Shuren, director of the FDA's Center for Devices and Radiological Health, disputed that characterization. He said the main difference between the United States and countries with cheaper, more-available tests is that those governments heavily invested in the tests. Having large purchasing agreements, including the one announced Wednesday by the White House, drives production up and prices down, and other countries began doing that earlier. In the White House briefing, Zients said the testing companies Quidel and OraSure are also rapidly expanding the production of their at-home tests to get more on the market. When pressed on why the White House did not increase the availability of such tests sooner, Zients said the tests became available only earlier this year. By the end of the year, he said, the United States should have about half a billion tests available per month, counting at-home tests and PCR tests that people can take at a pharmacy, clinic or doctor's office. "Together, the steps we're taking will ensure that every American, no matter their income level or Zip code, can access accurate, convenient and affordable testing," Zients said.



Experts had clamored for the government to invest in widespread rapid testing, saying improved detection of coronavirus outbreaks could have tamped down the virus's spread, particularly in the early months of the pandemic. "This slow trickle of [emergency authorizations] is all but promising to get us a large supply of rapid tests just in time for them to no longer be as effective against delta," said Michael Mina, a Harvard University epidemiologist who has advocated for at-home testing. "There are amazing tests produced in the billions that simply don't exist here in the U.S." One potential complication of the expansion of at-home testing is the impact on official counts of coronavirus infections. Some of the at-home tests have an app that helps people report positive cases so they get added to the official government tally. But the administration will also rely on people to self-report when at-home tests show they are infected, said Rochelle Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Some experts said it will be important for the government to educate people about when

the tests should be used, how to use them and what to do with the results.

"It's a relief to have access to rapid testing, but it will be critical to understand how to broadly disseminate and give guidance about when best to use these tests," said Kavita Patel, a primary care physician and nonresident fellow at the Brookings Institution who served in the Obama administration. "The last thing we want is for tests to go unused and sit on shelves, but you also need to give guidance to understand when these tests should be used." (Courtesy Reuters.com)

Related FDA Greenlights First Smartphone-Based Home COVID-19 Test



The FDA's emergency authorization comes just six months after BD and Scanwell Health announced their project in February. (BD)

The FDA issued its first green light for an at-home COVID-19 diagnostic that delivers results through the user's smartphone, streamlining self-testing for students and employees as they begin to return to classrooms and the workplace.

Developed by BD in collaboration with the digital testing company Scanwell Health, the Veritor rapid antigen test operates similar to a home pregnancy test, at first. After swishing a nasal swab in a tube of liquid reagents, drops on a testing strip trigger colored lines after about 15 minutes. There the smartphone takes over, using its camera to read and interpret the results more definitively. The agency's emergency authorization comes just six months after the companies' project was first announced in late February. It also arrives as demand for at-home testing begins to rise once more, with the quick-spreading delta variant driving a new surge in coronavirus cases.

The digital test, which does not need a prescription, will initially be made available to employers, schools and public health organizations looking to support routine screening programs, according to BD. "New mandates from governments and businesses are specifying the need for periodic testing for those who cannot or choose not to be vaccinated, and this new test may help businesses, governments or schools fulfill those requirements," Dave Hickey, BD's president of life sciences, said in a statement.



The smartphone app automatically analyzes the test results, after walking the user through the steps. (BD)

The diagnostic test is designed to be performed by anyone ages 14 and up and can be used for children as young as two with samples collected by an adult. Scanwell's smartphone app, available on iOS and Android, also provides step-by-step video instructions and timers and allows users to share their results.

Before the pandemic, Scanwell used its smartphone-powered testing technology to launch home diagnostics for urinary tract infections, in partnership with the telehealth provider Lemonaid Health, for remote diagnoses and prescriptions of antibiotics.

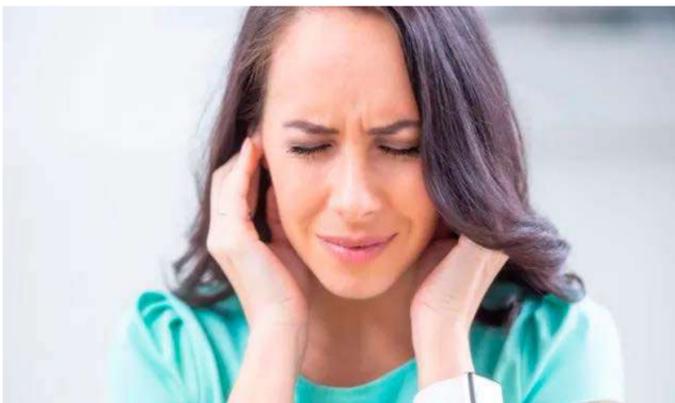
BD, meanwhile, first received an FDA authorization for its rapid COVID-19 test in July 2020. Run on the handheld Veritor Plus system—previously used for diseases such as the flu and strep throat—the device includes the antigen test strip, which is slotted into an analyzer for a result in 15 minutes. Other companies have been exploring the use of smartphone cameras in delivering test results during the pandemic, including a collaboration between diagnostic maker Cellex and the machine vision developer Gauss.



Meanwhile, researchers from the University of California, San Francisco, UC Berkeley, and the Gladstone Institutes have been working on a smartphone test that uses CRISPR to produce an accurate result.

Being developed in collaboration with Jennifer Doudna, winner of the 2020 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for co-discovering the gene editing technology, the test includes a darkened box—as specially tagged CRISPR enzymes snip the specific genes found in the coronavirus, they produce small flashes of light that can be picked up by the smartphone's camera. (Courtesy <https://www.fiercebitech.com/>)

From The CDC: Nine Signs Of A Delta Variant Infection



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

The new variant of COVID-19 is different from previous versions. It's "more dangerous than other variants of the virus," says the CDC. "The Delta variant is highly contagious, more than 2x as contagious as previous variants," not to mention, "some data suggest the Delta variant might cause more severe illness than previous variants in unvaccinated people." How do you know if you have it? Read on for 9 symptoms, get vaccinated if you haven't been yet, and ensure your own health and the health of others.

1. You May Have Bad Cold-Like Symptoms



The CDC lists congestion or runny nose and sore throat as symptoms of COVID-19. Some studies, as well as anecdotal evidence, indicate that these nose-and-throat symptoms are more prevalent with Delta than with other strains. Professor Tim Spector, who runs the Zoe Covid Symptom study, has said that Delta can feel "more like a bad cold" for younger people. That's why it's essential to stay on top of any symptoms and get tested.

2. You May Have Fever or Chills



Temperature dysregulation is very common with COVID but you can still have COVID without a fever. Most doctors don't worry until your temperature is above 100.4 degrees—that's when it's considered significant. By the way, a fever isn't a bad thing. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the chief medical advisor to the President and the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, has said it's a sign your immune response is working. But it is a worrying sign if you have one during a pandemic.

3. You May Have a Cough



A COVID cough "is usually a dry (un-

productive) cough, unless you have an underlying lung condition that normally makes you cough up phlegm or mucus," says the Zoe Symptom Study. "However, if you have COVID-19 and start coughing up yellow or green phlegm ('gunk') then this may be a sign of an additional bacterial infection in the lungs that needs treatment."

4. You May Have Shortness of Breath or Difficulty Breathing



If you have a hard time breathing, call a medical professional and the CDC says "look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately: Trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone."

5. You May Have Fatigue



Fatigue—as if you have, well, a virus—is a common symptom if you get COVID. It can also last longer than a year, according to one big new study in the Lancet. More than half of those studied had at least one symptom that did not go away after a COVID infection, at least after a year of study. An estimated 30% of people who get COVID may have this problem. The authors found that these "long haulers" suffer "fatigue or muscle weakness, problems with mobility, pain or discomfort, and anxiety or depression" among other debilitating problems.

6. You May Have Muscle or Body Aches



Dr. Fauci has warned that "long haulers" can develop "myalgia"—or body aches—and they can be caused by an initial infection. These might feel like a heart attack or just a pain in the neck, but are unusual in their appearance, in that you may not know how they happened. If it feels really weird, suspect COVID.

7. You May Have a Headache



When COVID first hit these shores, the symptoms were said to be a dry cough or shortness of breath. Little did the experts know at the time, there were many more—including crushing headaches, described by one patient as "an alien feeling inside of my body and a vise grip on my head but nothing that sounded like the typical description of COVID." Others have called it a "jackhammer."

8. You May Have a New Loss of Taste or Smell



The original keystone symptoms of a COVID infection, a loss of taste or smell are anecdotally less common than they were before, but can still happen and are a telltale sign of COVID.

9. You Have Have Gastrointestinal Issues



Nausea or vomiting and diarrhea are symptoms the CDC says to watch for. Originally thought of as a "respiratory illness," COVID has proven to disrupt all systems, including gastrointestinal. The CDC notes that "this list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19. Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness."

How to Stay Safe Out There



"From the standpoint of illness, hospitalization, suffering, and death, the unvaccinated are much more vulnerable," Fauci says. "When you look at the country as a whole in getting us back to normal, the unvaccinated — by not being vaccinated — are allowing the propagation and the spread of the outbreak, which ultimately impacts everyone." Get tested if you feel you have any of the symptoms mentioned here. And says the CDC: "Get vaccinated as soon as you can. If you're in an area of substantial or high transmission, wear a mask indoors in public, even if you're fully vaccinated," says the CDC. (Courtesy <https://www.eatthis.com/>)