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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Trump refuses to answer questions in N.Y. attorney general probe

NEW YORK, Aug 10 (Reuters) - Former U.S. President Donald Trump said on Wednesday he refused to answer questions during an appearance before New York state's attorney general in a civil investigation into his family's business practices, citing his constitutional right against self-incrimination.

Trump, his son Donald Trump Jr. and daughter Ivanka Trump had fought unsuccessfully to avoid appearing for testimony in state Attorney General Letitia James's probe into whether the Trump Organization inflated real estate values to obtain favorable loans and understated asset values to get tax breaks.

"I declined to answer the questions under the rights and privileges afforded to every citizen under the United States Constitution," Trump said in a statement issued roughly an hour after he arrived in a motorcade to the attorney general's office in lower Manhattan for the deposition behind closed doors.

The Constitution's Fifth Amendment protects against self-incrimination. Trump's decision not to answer questions still could carry consequences. Should the investigation lead to a trial, jurors could take his silence into account. Politically, it also could give adversaries ammunition about whether Trump has something to hide as he mulls another run for the presidency in 2024.

James has said her investigation has uncovered significant evidence that the Trump Organization, which manages hotels, golf courses and other real estate, gave banks and tax authorities misleading financial information to obtain benefits. read more

Trump, a Republican, in his statement again denied wrongdoing and sought to portray the investigation by James, a Democrat, as part of a years-long vendetta against him by her and others including the news media.

"I once asked, 'If you're innocent, why are you taking the Fifth Amendment?'" Trump said in his statement. "Now I know the answer to that question."

Trump added, "When your family, your company, and all the people in your orbit have become the targets of an unfounded, politically motivated Witch Hunt supported by lawyers, prosecutors, and the Fake News Media, you have no choice."

In the statement, Trump also made disparaging comments about James and violent crime in New York state.

Trump attempted to link the state attorney general's investigation to Monday's FBI search of his



Florida home Mar-a-Lago, which represented an escalation a federal probe into whether he illegally removed records from the White House as he left office in January 2021. Neither a spokeswoman for James nor a lawyer for Trump immediately responded to requests for comment.

Trump agreed in June to testify in the three-year investigation, but only after court decisions rejecting his argument that he should not have to do so because the probe was politically motivated. read more

Trump raised his fist as he left Trump Tower on Wednesday morning, wearing a blue suit with a flag pin on his lapel, before heading to the attorney general's office. New York City police officers and Secret Service personnel stood guard as the motorcade transporting him arrived.

By early afternoon, Trump had yet to be seen emerging from the building, suggesting that his deposition had yet to end.

'THE MOB TAKES THE FIFTH'
Trump has in the past disparaged people for exercising their Fifth Amendment rights.

"The mob takes the Fifth," Trump said during a 2016 campaign rally. "If you're innocent, why are

you taking the Fifth Amendment?"

In that instance, he was discussing people who had exercised their Fifth Amendment rights in a probe relating to Democrat Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server for official correspondence during her time as secretary of state. Clinton was Trump's opponent in the presidential election that year.

Donald Trump Jr. and Ivanka Trump also testified in recent weeks in James' probe, according to a person familiar with the matter. Reuters could not determine whether they also refused to answer questions. Their brother Eric Trump invoked the Fifth Amendment more than 500 times when he testified in October 2020.

Monday's FBI search related to the National Archives and Records Administration, which safeguards presidential records that belong to the public, and whether classified documents were kept at Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, according to a person familiar with the matter. read more

Trump has faced a slew of legal troubles since leaving office. He also continues to claim falsely that the 2020 election that he lost to Democrat Joe Biden was stolen through widespread voting fraud.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

08/09/2022

Musk Is Trying To Exit The Twitter Deal

Last weekend we hosted the graduation ceremony of the Little Reporter Camp at our International TV Studio. Seeing the first group of youngsters performing wonderful programs on the stage and thanking their parents, relatives and teachers off stage was a wonderful experience.

When I issued the graduation certificates I encouraged everyone to continue to work hard to be a good student in school, to be filial to your parents at home and aspire to be a person who contributes to society.



The media business we are engaged in today has a very great responsibility to the society. We hope more of the younger generation will continue to relate in the future.

of the country. We see most Asian students are excellent in character and learning. The reason for this is that their parents attach great importance to their children's education. No matter how difficult the environment may be, they will be sure their children go to the best schools.



We would like to thank their teachers for the careful teaching and the enthusiastic support from their parents. All the parents wanted their sons to become dragons and their daughters to become phoenixes.

Hosting and issuing the certificates is my happiest thing. Seeing these excellent and polite children and their beaming smiles will always be branded in our hearts.

Education is a century-old plan



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Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



A Ukrainian serviceman fires with a ZU-23-2 anti-aircraft cannon at a position near a front line in the Kharkiv region, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, Ukraine August 10, 2022. REUTERS/Vyacheslav Madiyevskyy



Pope Francis greets people after holding the weekly general audience at the Vatican, August 10. REUTERS/Yara Nardi



Migrants wait to disembark from a Spanish coast guard vessel, in the port of Arguineguin, in the island of Gran Canaria, Spain. REUTERS/Borja Suarez



A Buddhist monk listens to a protester's speech at an anti-government rally to mark one month since a massive protest forced then Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country and step down, amid the country's economic crisis, in Colombo, Sri Lanka. REUTERS/Kim Kyung-Hoon



A man carries ballots from a bus after arriving at an Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) tallying centre after the general election in Nairobi, Kenya August 10. REUTERS/James Oatway



A member of the Singapore Armed Forces Red Lions parachute team performs over Marina Bay during National Day celebrations in Singapore. REUTERS/Edgar Su

SPECIAL REPORT

The World Has Entered A New Age Of Epidemics

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



Illustration above depicts the world in a Petri dish.

In the 1950s, 400-500 Americans died every year from measles and another 100 from chicken pox. In the last major outbreak of rubella — in 1964-'65 — some 11,000 pregnant American women lost their babies and 2,100 newborns died.

• **The 1960s vaccine revolution** all but wiped out these diseases by 2000. But now they are back — in the U.S. and around the world.

• **Much onus for this regression** so far has been laid on the global anti-vaccination movement. But experts blame much more sweeping reasons, primarily a tectonic change in how humans live now as opposed to three, four and five decades ago.

• **At the top of the list:** we are living closer together in ever-swelling cities, trading and traveling much more, creating climate change, migrating in big numbers — and failing to keep vaccination levels high enough for “herd immunity.”

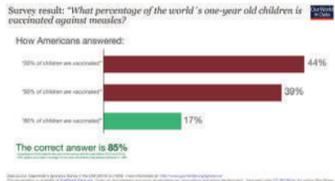
“What changed is that society changed,” Jeremy Farrar, an expert on infectious disease and director of the U.K.-based Wellcome Trust, tells Axios.

• **Driving the news:** Disease was un-

der control for a few decades, but now the environmental circumstances under which they were contained have utterly changed. So new answers have to be found.

The big picture: For 2019, U.S. officials have confirmed 481 measles cases in 16 states as of Saturday, according to the website Precision Vaccinations. The Centers for Disease Control confirms 151 cases of mumps for January and February in 30 states and the District of Columbia. And Kentucky alone has an outbreak of 32 cases of chickenpox as of last week. Measles cases will “certainly” surpass 2018 due to lack of vaccinations

Europe, too, has had a surge of mumps, pertussis, rubella and tetanus over the last two years, reports the World Health Organization. Measles alone killed 72 people in Europe last year, among 82,596



who contracted the disease, according to the agency.

• In the U.S., the outbreaks are often concentrated in tight-knit communities like former Soviet immigrants in Clark County, Washington.

• Three states — New York, Texas and Washington — are the “leading measles hot-spots” in the U.S., per Precision Vaccinations.

• The diseases are often brought into these communities by travelers returning from countries like Israel, Madagascar, the Philippines and Ukraine.

How the revolution happened: The vaccine against measles was licensed in 1963, chickenpox in 1995, mumps in 1967, and rubella in 1969. Jonas Salk’s polio vaccine — igniting the vaccine revolution — came into use in 1955, and the oral version, created by Albert Sabin, was commercialized in 1961.

But the revival of these once-unavoidable, disfiguring and sometimes deadly diseases is only part of the new age of epidemics — they are a component of the general breakdown of the decades-old political and social order.

• **This is particularly apparent in the anti-vaccination movement, what has been rebranded “vaccine hesitancy.”** “People wonder, ‘Why am I still getting vaccinated if disease no longer exists?’ It’s not a stupid question,” Farrar said.

• **But the trend includes the other social factors as well:** climate change, migration, urbanization and elevated travel, which are spreading disease-carrying species such as mosquitoes, bats and rats.

What’s next: Farrar is pressing for governments to create a commercial impetus for companies to figure out how to navigate the new age. But to get started, says Peter Hotez, dean at the Baylor College of Medicine and author of “Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel’s Autism,” they need to separate out the various factors.

• **Malaria in Greece and Italy** have been blamed on climate change, but Hotez



says human migration and re-emerging poverty may also be at fault.

• **In Texas, the appearance of Zika and dengue** may be attributable to any or all the same factors. “We don’t know,” he said. (Courtesy axios.com)

Related
Measles outbreak is bringing vaccine exemptions into spotlight
The federal government may try to take action if states don’t tighten their vaccine exemption laws and measles continues to spread in sections of the U.S., FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb tells Axios.

Driving the news: Overall case numbers of measles remain low in the U.S. but the disease is growing in areas of high non-vaccination rates. Some states like Washington are considering tightening their exemptions even as they continue to face a more organized anti-vaccination movement.

Background: The highly contagious disease can only be controlled if there’s a large vaccination rate in the population, which the World Health Organization says should be 93%-95% of people.

• States are allowed to adopt their own rules over what types of exemptions are allowed for vaccines. All of them allow exemptions for medical reasons, but many also provide exemptions on religious and/or philosophical grounds.

• These pockets of unvaccinated people are transmitting measles in the U.S., which is particularly dangerous to those who can’t get vaccinated, including babies under 12 months and people with susceptible immune systems.

• Gottlieb says the vaccine is one of the most effective ones (97% with 2 doses) created so far, and for one of the most contagious viruses.

• Measles can cause various complications, including pneumonia, brain damage and sometimes death, and it has been

linked to longer term immune problems.

What’s happening now
WHO reported last week that measles cases tripled globally in 2018 from the prior year, and current reports show multiple deadly outbreaks in the Philippines, Ukraine, Israel and Madagascar.

In Washington state, the number of confirmed cases has more than doubled since Gov. Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency on Jan. 25, to 54 as of Feb. 13.

• Clark County, where a majority of the Washington cases are located, reported a 70% MMR vaccination rate for 19-35 month olds. But since the outbreak, there was an almost 450% increase in vaccination rates in January compared with the same month the prior year.

In New York, there is an outbreak in Rockland County, Monroe County and New York City, and Texas reported 8 cases in 5 different counties as of Feb. 14.

“It’s a self-inflicted wound,” says Peter Hotez, dean at Baylor College of Medicine who published a study last year showing possible U.S. “hotspots” of measles due to vaccine exemptions, that he says is already proving to be true.

• Pro-vaccination groups are “losing the battle” to anti-vaccination groups, who’ve been very active on social media and forming at least one PAC to promote their message, he says.

The other side: Barbara Loe Fisher, co-founder and president of the nonprofit National Vaccine Information Center often labeled as anti-vaccination, tells Axios that 100 cases of measles in a population of 320 million “is not a public health emergency.”

• “[I]t should not be used to justify eliminating the legal right to exercise informed consent to vaccination, which is protected by the inclusion of flexible medical, religious and conscientious-belief vaccine exemptions in public health laws,” she says. (Courtesy axios.com)



“It’s an avoidable tragedy,” Gottlieb, who says he’s usually a proponent of state rights, tells Axios. “Too many states have lax laws.”

• **Measles can cause various complications, including pneumonia, brain damage and sometimes death, and it has been**

Aggressive Lambda COVID Variant Found In Houston Methodist Hospital



Photo: Francois Picard/AFP via Getty Images

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

The Houston Methodist Hospital System has reported its first case of the Lambda COVID-19 variant on Monday as cases rise across the state, per ABC News.

The Lambda variant was first detected in Peru last August. From this April through June, the variant made up 81% of COVID-19 cases in Peru, according to the World Health Organization.

The WHO categorizes it as a “variant of interest.” It has already been detected in 29 countries. The hospital had a little more than 100 COVID-19 patients across the eight hospitals in its network last week, but that number rose to 185 as of Monday. The majority of the infections are in those who remain unvaccinated. 85% have been diagnosed with the Delta variant, per ABC News, which is the top concern across the U.S. as it accounts for 83% of nationwide cases.

“I don’t think there’s sufficient evidence at this point that we should be more concerned about lambda than delta, I still think delta is the primary concern for us,” Wesley Long, medical director of Diagnostic Microbiology at Houston Methodist, said, per ABC.



Photo: Francois Picard/AFP via Getty

Images
“There’s a lot more evidence that we have that delta is much more contagious, the viral loads are much higher,” he added.

Data on the lambda variant is currently limited, though it has been designated as a “variant of interest” by the World Health Organization. The designation places it apart from a “variant of concern” such as the delta variant.

News of this new variant in Texas comes as cases in the U.S. have surged, with health officials stating that the highly contagious delta variant has become the dominant strain of coronavirus in the country.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Rochelle Walensky said Tuesday that the delta variant now makes up for more than 80 percent of confirmed coronavirus cases in the U.S. The director has previously stated that the pandemic will now become one that directly effects the unvaccinated, and U.S. health officials, in addition to the Biden administration, have pushed for Americans to get the shot.

Wesley Long, medical director of Diagnostic Microbiology at Houston Methodist, told ABC that there is not enough evidence to suggest that the lambda variant is of more concern than the delta strain at this moment. ABC reports that the number of COVID-19 cases at Houston Methodist have nearly doubled in the past week, going from just

over 100 last week to 185 on Monday.



The SARS-CoV-2 Lambda variant, also known as lineage C.37, is a variant of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. It was first detected in Peru in December 2020.



On 14 June 2021, the World Health Organization named it Lambda variant and designated it as a variant of interest. (Courtesy Wikipedia)

“We’re seeing an alarming spike in the number of COVID-19 cases across the Houston area, with the steepest increase happening over the weekend,” the hospital system told ABC. “The increased hospitalizations add stress to many of our hospitals that are nearing capacity.” Houston Methodist had a little over 100 COVID-19 patients across the hospital system last week. That number rose to 185 Monday, with a majority of those infected being unvaccinated, according to a statement released by the hospital Monday.

Among those infections, about 85% have been diagnosed with the delta variant, hospital officials said.

“We’re seeing an alarming spike in the number of COVID-19 cases across the Houston area, with the steepest increase happening over the weekend,” Houston Methodist said. “The increased hospitalizations add stress to many of our hospitals that are nearing capacity.”

Hospital president and CEO Dr. Marc Boom stressed it is “imperative” that the community “get vaccinated and decrease virus spread.”

Francis Picard/AFP via Getty Images, FILE
Houston Methodist Baytown Hospital in Baytown, Texas, June 22, 2021.

Houston Methodist had a little over 100 COVID-19 patients across the hospital system last week. That number rose to 185 Monday, with a majority of those infected being unvaccinated, according to a statement released by the hospital Monday.

Despite the report of the lambda variant, experts at Houston Methodist say delta is still the primary concern in the U.S.

“The lambda is the dominant variant in Peru and Peru has had a very difficult time with COVID-19. It shares mutations in common with the alpha variants, the beta, the gamma, which is the dominant variant in Brazil,” Dr. Wesley Long, medical director of Diagnostic Microbiology at Houston Methodist, told ABC News.

“I don’t think there’s sufficient evidence at this point that we should be more concerned about lambda than delta, I still think delta is the primary concern for us. There’s a lot more evidence that we have that delta is much more contagious, the viral loads are much higher,” he added.

The lambda variant “has been associated with substantive rates of community transmission in multiple countries, with rising prevalence over time concurrent with increased COVID-19 incidence,” the WHO said in its June report. In June, the variant was detected in 29 countries.

Brandon Bell/Getty Images, FILE
Volunteer doctors and nurses prepare ahead of a COVID-19 vaccine clinic on May 13, 2021 in Houston.

The delta variant, which was first detected in India in December, now accounts for about 83% of all sequenced COVID-19 cases in the United States, Center for Disease Control and Prevention Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said during a Senate hearing Tuesday. The WHO designates delta as a “variant of concern.”

Long noted that Houston Methodist has seen its positivity rate increase and hospitalizations rise, but the situation on the ground is still “far below” the winter peak.

“[Infections are] on the increase. How many more cases are we going to get?”

Long said. “We’re going to need more folks to get vaccinated and folks who aren’t vaccinated in particular to practice all the safe practices that we learned through the pandemic to help slow the spread of COVID. All those are critically important to keep this delta wave under control.”

At the moment, 51% of Texas’ state population aged 12 and up is fully vaccinated, according to state data. (Courtesy thehill.com and abcnews.com)

Related
Delta Variant Now Makes Up 83% Of U.S. COVID Cases, CDC Director Says

The more transmissible Delta variant now accounts for 83% of COVID-19 cases in the United States, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention director Rochelle Walensky said during a Senate hearing Tuesday.

Why it matters: The “dramatic increase,” up from 50% on July 3, has led to a rise in virus-related deaths, Walensky told lawmakers. COVID fatalities have risen by nearly 48% since last week to an average of about 239 per day, according to Walensky.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Rochelle Walensky (Photo: Greg Nash/The Hill/ Bloomberg via Getty Images)

The CDC director also said that the percentage of cases from the Delta variant is “even higher” in some parts of the country, “particularly in areas of low vaccination rates.”

• “To date, our data indicates that vaccines are available to neutralize the circulating variants in the United States and provide protection against severe disease, hospitalization, and death,” Walensky added.

• “The message from CDC remains clear: the best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 variants is to prevent the spread of disease and vaccination is the most powerful tool we have.”

• “Each death is tragic and even more heartbreaking when we know that the majority of these deaths could be prevented with a simple, safe, available vaccine.” (Courtesy axios.com)

