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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

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EU plans to cap Russian gas price as Putin warns West of winter freeze

BRUSSELS/VLADIVOSTOK Russia, Sept 7 (Reuters) - The European Union proposed a price cap on Russian gas on Wednesday after President Vladimir Putin threatened to cut off all energy supplies if it took such a step, raising the risk of rationing in some of the world's richest countries this winter.

The escalating standoff could drive up sky-high European gas prices further, adding to already eye-watering bills EU governments are paying to stop their energy providers collapsing and prevent cash-strapped customers freezing in the cold months ahead.

Europe has accused Russia of weaponising energy supplies in retaliation for Western sanctions imposed on Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine. Russia blames those sanctions for causing the gas supply problems, which it puts down to pipeline faults.

As tensions rose, Putin said contracts could be ripped up in the event of price caps and warned the West it risked being frozen like a wolf's tail in a famous Russian fairy tale. [read more](#)

The EU however plans to press ahead with a price cap on Russian gas and also a ceiling on the price paid for electricity from generators that do not run on gas. [read more](#)

EU energy ministers are due to hold an emergency meeting on Friday.

"We will propose a price cap on Russian gas... We must cut Russia's revenues which Putin uses to finance this atrocious war in Ukraine," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen told reporters.

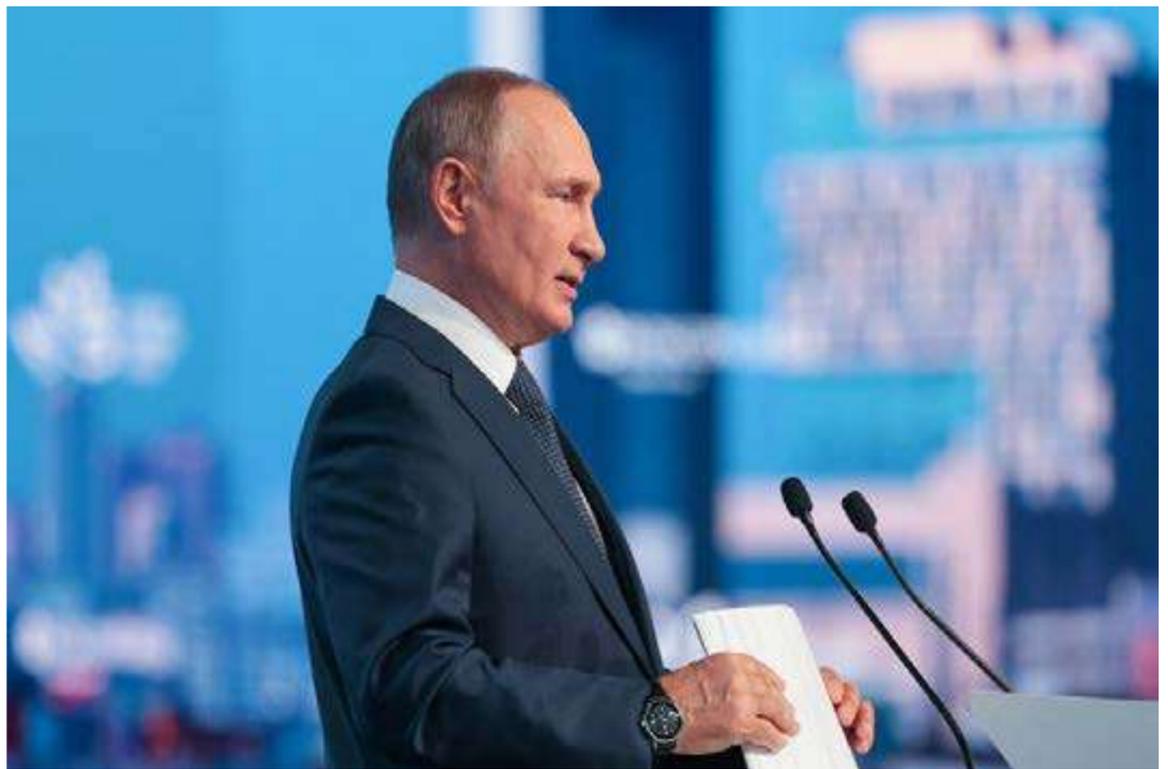
The Netherlands, which has consistently opposed a gas price cap, would support one that targets Russian gas, a source with knowledge of the matter told Reuters on Wednesday.

However, a Czech minister said earlier it should be taken off the agenda for Friday's meeting. The Czechs are helping to guide discussions as holders of the EU's rotating presidency.

NO SUPPLIES

Putin had anticipated the move and said Russia would hit back.

"We will not supply anything at all if it contradicts our interests," Putin said at an economic forum in



Vladivostok.

"We will not supply gas, oil, coal, heating oil - we will not supply anything," Putin said. He also questioned a United Nations-brokered deal to export grain from Ukraine.

Russian President Vladimir Putin delivers a speech at the plenary session of the 2022 Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) in Vladivostok, Russia September 7, 2022. Sergey Bobylev/TASS Host Photo Agency/Handout via REUTERS

Europe usually imports about 40% of its gas and 30% of its oil from Russia.

The energy crisis facing Europe has grown more acute after Russia's Gazprom (GAZP.MM) fully suspended gas supplied through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline to Germany after it said it found an engine oil leak during maintenance work last week.

Eurelectric, a body representing the European electricity industry, also criticised plans for an EU cap of 200 euros per megawatt

The Russian president said Germany and Western sanctions affecting the supply of parts were to blame for the pipeline not being operational.

The impact of the surge in prices is forcing companies to curtail production and governments to spend billions on support to cushion consumers from the impact.

New British Prime Minister Liz Truss is expected to unveil her plans on Thursday, with the bill from a price freeze forecast to rise towards 100 billion pounds. [read more](#)

hour on the price of electricity from generators that do not run on gas.

"The root cause of the problem is a shortage of gas supply and our addiction to imported fossil fuels. Governments should seek to tackle this rather than resorting to distortive, ad-hoc interventions in the electricity market," said Kristian Ruby, Secretary General of Eurelectric.

However, European utilities stocks rallied on the news with analysts viewing the level of the cap as a better than expected outcome for the industry.



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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

09/06/2022

U.K. Has A New Prime Minister

After she was elected leader of the ruling Conservative party on Monday, Liz Truss will be Britain's next Prime Minister to succeed the scandal-tarnished Boris Johnson.

Truss has been the country's Foreign Secretary and has been appealing to the right wing party, being faithful to tax cutting and taking a hard line on China and the European Union.

She will also be facing the winter energy crisis, widespread strikes and economic recession. All of these issue will test her ability to run the country. Her victory means she is the third female leader of the UK after Margaret Thatcher and Theresa May.

Outgoing Prime Minister Johnson said, "Truss has the right plan to tackle the cost of living crisis, will unite our party and continue the great work of uniting and leveling up our country."



One-Third Of Pakistan Is Under Water

A third of Pakistan was left underwater after experiencing the heaviest rain on record, especially in the southern provinces of Sindh and Baluchistan which have seen five times their normal levels of monsoonal rain.

The number of total deaths is over 1,400, with almost one-third of the victims being children. There are three million children

now in need of urgent assistance across Pakistan due to the risk of waterborne diseases, drowning and malnutrition.

The UN is delivering the needed food, water and medicine to the area, but it is not going to be enough.

We are urging all the people to help. I spoke to the local president of the Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and asked them what can we do to help? We should organize some relief meeting to do our best for those suffering people in Pakistan.



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Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



France's Caroline Garcia reacts during her quarter final U.S. Open match against Coco Gauff of the U.S. at Flushing Meadows, New York. REUTERS/Mike Segar



People line up for food handed out by volunteers in Saltivka, one of the most damaged residential areas in Kharkiv, Ukraine September 6, 2022. REUTERS/Viacheslav Ratynskyi



A fire is seen as demonstrators use makeshift shields during an anti-government protest amid a stalemate between the government of President Guillermo Lasso and largely indigenous demonstrators who demand an end to emergency measures, in Quito, Ecuador June 23. REUTERS/Adriano Machado



Water is dropped near a fireman standing on fire retardant painted hillside as the Fairview Fire burns near Hemet, California. REUTERS/David Swanson



Rescue workers evacuate quake-affected residents at the site of a landslide near Moxi town, following a 6.8-magnitude earthquake in Luding county, Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province, China. China Daily



China's Quan Hongchan in action during the women's 10m platform FINA World Championships semifinal at Duna Arena, Budapest, Hungary. REUTERS/Lisa Leutner

The Next Big COVID Disaster Could Be Here



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

With India's dramatic surge in COVID-19 cases continuing to devastate the country, wary epidemiologists are trying to forecast where the novel coronavirus will strike next. Some experts are casting a wary glance toward another vast, developing country that—like India—suffers huge health disparities and uneven access to vaccines: Nigeria. With 200 million people, it's the most populous country in West Africa and the seventh most populous country in the world. "Nigeria is actually quite vulnerable," Ngozi Erondui, a senior research fellow at the Chatham House Center for Global Health Security in the United Kingdom, told The Daily Beast. "It has a lot of similarities to India." The world isn't powerless to stop COVID from devastating Nigeria the way it's doing India. More equitable distribution of vaccines across borders could build a firewall against a surge in cases in Nigeria, as well as in other less developed countries. But that would require the world's richer countries to share lifesaving resources with

their poorer neighbors. And if India's tragic example proved anything, it's that the world's vaccine "haves" are in no hurry to help out the "have-nots" on distant continents. That said, "African" is not synonymous with "poor." The continent is huge and diverse. Its 54 countries with their 1.2 billion people run the gamut from big to small, rich to poor, powerful to weak, democratic to authoritarian.



Likewise, the African countries' pandemic experiences have varied. South Africa—one of the richer countries on the continent—got hit hard last summer, and then again in January. Officials there

have logged more than 54,000 deaths. That's 93 fatalities per 100,000 people, a rate that's much lower than the 175 deaths per 100,000 population the U.S. has registered, but much higher than the global average of 38 fatalities per 100,000 people. Many of the less industrialized African countries have, so far, managed to avoid the catastrophic surges in infections that have driven up death tolls in richer countries. A total of 580,000 Americans have died of COVID; only 1,600 Nigerians have died. But that doesn't mean COVID isn't coming for Nigeria and other African countries—it might just mean it hasn't gotten there yet. "I see raging COVID-19 fires breaking out across the world in the coming weeks and months," Lawrence Gostin, a Georgetown University global health expert, told The Daily Beast. "And I am most concerned about Africa."



"I see the crisis in India as a leading indicator of what is to come in other low and middle-income countries," Gostin added. Bear in mind, India—despite its teeming cities, limited public health measures and patchwork health care—was relatively lucky until recently. The country of 1.37 billion counted just 160,000 fatal cases through March, for a rate of 11 per 100,000. Then in April, a new and more transmissible variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, known to geneticists as "B.1.617," spread across the country, driving cases and deaths through the roof. In a span of just a couple of weeks, India added nearly 50,000 deaths. The fatality rate jumped to 15 per 100,000.

The Frustrating Reason We're Flying Blind on New COVID Variants India's COVID surge is ongoing as of this writing, but the trends are encouraging. The daily rates of new cases and deaths are flattening. While every indication is that tens of thousands more Indians will die before the surge ends, at least the pandemic isn't still getting worse there.



But the novel coronavirus is an opportunist. It looks for densely packed, unprotected populations. Spreading via aerosols from one person to the next, it sets up a proverbial laboratory in each body it infects. Every individual SARS-CoV-2 infection mutates every two weeks for as long as it's active, looking for evolutionary pathways that might produce a new increasingly transmissible variant. New variants help the virus spread even faster in a self-reinforcing cycle that ends

only when strong social-distancing mandates, vaccinations, the antibodies of survivors—or, more likely, a combination of all three—cut off its transmission pathways. The harder it is to socially-distance, and the lower the vaccine uptake, the longer the pathogen has to run amok. It's no accident SARS-CoV-2 thrived in India this month. Popular religious festivals drew huge, maskless crowds. Meanwhile, India's vaccination effort has been abysmal. The country has fully vaccinated just 3 percent of its population, compared to more than 30 percent in the United States. The global average for full vaccination is slightly more than 3 percent. Nigeria, with its teeming cities, deep poverty and ramshackle health system is, from an epidemiological standpoint, a lot like India—except worse, in some aspects. Where India at least has some domestic vaccine-manufacturers, Nigeria has none. It must import all of its doses. That helps to explain why the country has partially vaccinated just 1 percent of its population—and fully vaccinated almost no one. The government in Lagos expects to receive 84 million vaccine doses from AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson in coming weeks.

(Article Continues Below)



COMMUNITY

(Article Continues From Above)

But that's enough to fully vaccinate just one out of five Nigerians. Vaccinating three-quarters of the population—the proportion experts say could result in "herd immunity" that blocks most transmission pathways—could take until 2022. To help Nigeria and other unprotected countries, the world's rich countries should stop hoarding excess doses. More jabs isn't a panacea, of course—even a country with plenty of vaccines can have trouble administering it.



But while logistics, as well as hesitancy among wary citizens, could slow inoculations, a shortage of doses definitely will slow it. "The only way to know for sure how well Nigeria will administer vaccines is to ship it. Once they have a larger supply of doses, then we can see how things like distribution and hesitancy are impacting their vaccination campaign," Shaun Truelove, an epidemiologist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, told The Daily Beast. Global supply isn't the biggest problem. The U.S. alone, a country with multiple competing vaccine-producers, is sitting on a stockpile of more than 60 million unused doses even as more vials arrive from factories and the vaccine-uptake rate ticks downward, especially among Republicans. It wasn't until weeks into India's ongoing COVID surge that the administration of President Joe Biden promised to ship some of its extra vaccines to the country. The spare jabs, from AstraZeneca, aren't even authorized for use in the United States. To Americans, those doses aren't just sur-

The Next Big COVID Disaster Could Be Here

plus—they're useless. Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



What's particularly egregious about the delay in releasing surplus vaccines is that health officials anticipated this problem a year ago. Last spring, the U.N.'s World Health Organization, along with several international public-private partnerships, worked together to set up the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access initiative, or COVAX. The idea was for rich countries to pay for vaccines for poor countries. COVAX's goal was to deliver 100 million doses by March. It actually delivered fewer than 40 million. "This has set Nigeria and many countries up to fail," Erondu said. The United States is part of the problem. The Trump administration refused to sign on to COVAX, a move that reflected its narrow "America-first" philosophy. The Trump White House either didn't understand—or didn't care—that vaccinating poor countries helps protect rich countries, too. Viruses don't respect borders, after all. The Biden White House reversed the decision back in February. The administration pledged \$4 billion in cash, making the U.S. COVAX's biggest financial donor, albeit belatedly. In a parallel move, Biden signalled support for a controversial proposal for the World Trade Organization to suspend patent protections for COVID vaccines, in theory allowing any manufacturer in any country to produce doses.



But experts are divided on whether suspending patents would result in more doses reaching the countries that need it. Meanwhile, many richer countries have been late to fulfill their COVAX pledges, piling delay on delay as the novel coronavirus targets one unprotected population after another. To help Nigeria and other unprotected countries, the world's rich countries should stop hoarding excess doses. More jabs isn't a panacea, of course—even a country with plenty of vaccines can have trouble administering it. But while logistics, as well as hesitancy among wary citizens, could slow inoculations, a shortage of doses definitely will slow it. "The only way to know for sure how well Nigeria will administer vaccines is to ship it. Once they have a larger supply of doses, then we can see how things like distribution and hesitancy are impacting their vaccination campaign," Shaun Truelove, an epidemiologist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, told The Daily Beast. Global supply isn't the biggest problem. The U.S. alone, a country with multiple competing vaccine-producers, is sitting on a stockpile of more than 60 million unused doses even as more vials arrive from factories and the vaccine-uptake rate ticks downward, especially among Republicans.



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Nigeria is ripe for infection. But the West African country doesn't have to suffer the same fate as India. Vaccines are available. Mechanisms exist to get it to countries that need it most. What's lacking is a sense of urgency in the countries that have more than enough, and don't seem to appreciate the importance of sharing it. (Courtesy https://news.yahoo.com)

