



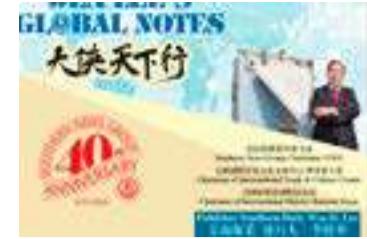
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Inside C2

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

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Thursday, September 15 2022

Biden administration races to avert rail shutdown, smaller union rejects deal

DETROIT/LOS ANGELES, Sept 14 (Reuters) - Biden administration officials, keen to avert a potential rail shutdown that could disrupt cargo shipments and impede food and fuel supplies, hosted labor contract talks on Wednesday as one of the smaller unions involved in the dispute rejected a deal and Amtrak canceled long-distance passenger trips.

Railroads including Union Pacific (UNP.N), Berkshire Hathaway's (BRK.A.N) BNSF and Norfolk Southern (NSC.N) have until a minute after midnight on Friday to reach deals with three holdout unions representing about 60,000 workers before a work stoppage affecting freight and Amtrak could begin.

Talks between labor unions and railroads were continuing late on Wednesday at the U.S. Labor Department overseen by Secretary Marty Walsh, while Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said it was urgent to reach a deal to avoid a shutdown.

"Everybody is going to have to move a little in order to get a deal done," Buttigieg told reporters on the sidelines of the Detroit auto show.

A union representing about 4,900 machinists, mechanics and maintenance personnel said on Wednesday its members voted to reject its tentative deal.

Railroads have offered significant pay increases. Three of 12 unions, representing about half of the 115,000 workers affected by the negotiations, are holding out for better working conditions. Two of those 12 unions, representing more than 11,000 workers, have ratified deals, the National Carriers' Conference Committee (NCCC), which is bargaining on behalf of railroads, said on Wednesday.

Unions are enjoying a surge of public and worker support in the wake of the pandemic, when "essential" employees risked COVID-19 exposure to keep goods moving and employers reaped hefty profits, labor and corporate experts say.

A shutdown could freeze almost 30% of U.S. cargo shipments by weight, stoke inflation, cost the U.S. economy as much as \$2 billion per day and unleash a cascade of transportation woes affecting the U.S. energy, agriculture, manufacturing and retail sectors.

White House spokeswoman Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters aboard Air Force One that a shutdown of the freight rail system would be an "unacceptable outcome for our economy and the American people and all parties must work to avoid just that."

President Joe Biden's administration has begun making contingency plans to ensure deliveries of critical goods in the event of a shutdown.

The stakes are high for Biden, who has vowed to rein in soaring consumer costs ahead of November elections that will determine whether his fellow Democrats maintain control of Congress.

A cargo train is seen near the border between the U.S. and Mexico, in Laredo. A cargo train is seen near the border between the U.S. and Mexico, in Laredo.



U.S. President Joe Biden travels to Wisconsin and Pennsylvania on Labor Day

"Unless they reach a breakthrough soon, rail workers will go on strike this Friday. If you don't think that will have a negative impact on our economy ... think again," said U.S. Senator John Cornyn, a Republican and Biden critic.

UNCLEAR IF CONGRESS WILL STEP IN
Senator Bernie Sanders late on Wednesday objected to a Republican bid to unanimously approve legislation to prevent a rail strike, noting the profits the rail industry has made.

If agreements are not reached, employers could also lock out workers. Railroads and unions may agree to stay at the bargaining table, or the Democratic-led U.S. Congress could intervene by extending talks or establishing settlement terms. read more

House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi said it was not clear whether Congress would step in, noting that the main issue is a lack of sick leave for workers.

"We'd rather see negotiations prevail so there's no need for any actions from Congress," Pelosi added.

Amtrak, which uses tracks maintained by freight railways, said it would cancel all long-distance trips on Thursday. read more

Industry groups continue to call on Congress to help, saying a rail shutdown would hit as grain farmers prepare for harvest and consumers gear up for winter weather and Christmas holiday shopping.

Railroad customers have long complained that rail service is expensive and unreliable, with the industry's decision to halt shipments of hazardous materials, crude oil and refrigerated food and general merchandise ahead of a potential shutdown making matters worse.

Rail hubs in Chicago and Dallas were already clogged and suffering from equipment shortages before the contract showdown. Those bottlenecks are backing up cargo at U.S. seaports by as much as a month. And, once cargo gets to rail hubs in locations such as Chicago, Dallas, Kansas City and Memphis, Tennessee, it can sit another month or longer.

Package delivery company United Parcel Service (UPS.N), one of the largest U.S. rail customers, and U.S. seaports said they are working on contingency plans.

Meanwhile, factory owners are fretting about idling machinery while automakers worry that a shutdown could extend vehicle buyer wait times. Elsewhere, food and energy companies warn that additional service disruptions could create even sharper price hikes.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

09/15/2022

"Moonshot" Plan To End Cancer

President Biden is promoting a plan to end cancer on the 60th anniversary of one of former President Kennedy's most famous speeches.

President Biden detailed his cancer moonshot initiative in February which aims to cut cancer deaths in the United States in half over the next quarter century.

Biden said that, "We are calling it a moonshot and that is because I believe that this effort is like President Kennedy's call to land a



man on the moon. It is truly a call to humankind to be bold and do the big thing."

Sixty years ago President Kennedy gave a speech at Rice University in Houston, Texas, to proclaim that the United States will put a man on the

moon by the end of the 1960's. The first man landed on the moon in July of 1969, meeting the Kennedy deadline with five months to spare.

Today we are still facing Covid-19 as well as cancer which is still the world's biggest public enemy and first killer of mankind. We strongly support the president's effort to use the same determination it took to land a man on the moon and make cancer a part of history.



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Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



U.S. President Joe Biden poses for a selfie with guests following an event to celebrate the enactment of the "Inflation Reduction Act of 2022," which Biden signed into law in August, on the South Lawn at the White House in Washington. REUTERS/Kevin Lamarque



Ukrainian serviceman patrols an area as a dog sits near by in the town of Izium, recently liberated by Ukrainian Armed Forces, in Kharkiv region, Ukraine. REUTERS/Gleb Garanich



The coffin of Queen Elizabeth II is transported from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Hall in London. Vadim Ghirda/Pool via REUTERS



Britain's King Charles and Britain's William, Prince of Wales march during a procession where the coffin of Britain's Queen Elizabeth is transported from Buckingham Palace to the Houses of Parliament for her lying in state, in London, Britain. REUTERS/Sarah Meysonnier



Pope Francis kisses an encolpion of Bishop Anthony of the Russian Orthodox Church during their meeting on the day of the VII Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions at the Palace of Independence in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan. Vatican Media/Handout via REUTERS



An aerial view shows vessels moored at a fishing port as Typhoon Muifa approaches, in Zhoushan, Zhejiang province, China. China Daily via REUTERS

Monkeypox Outbreak Is Primarily Spreading Through Sex, WHO Officials Say

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



Key Point

*European nations have confirmed dozens of cases in what's become the largest outbreak of monkeypox ever on the Continent, according to the German military.

*The U.S. has confirmed at least two cases and Canada has confirmed at least five so far. Belgium just introduced a mandatory 21-day quarantine for monkeypox patients.

An outbreak of the monkeypox virus in North America and Europe is primarily spreading through sex among men with about 200 confirmed and suspected cases across at least a dozen countries. World Health Organization (WHO) officials said on Monday. The outbreak has quickly advanced across Europe and North America over the last week and is expected to be far more widespread as more doctors look for the signs and symptoms. Two confirmed and one suspected case of monkeypox in the U.K. were reported to the WHO just 10 days ago, the first cases this year outside of Africa where the virus has generally circulated at low levels over the last 40 years, the organization said.

"We've seen a few cases in Europe over the last five years, just in travelers, but this is the first time we're seeing cases across many countries at the same time in people who have not traveled to the endemic regions in Africa," Dr. Rosamund Lewis, who runs the WHO's smallpox research, said in a Q&A live-streamed on the organization's social media channels.

European nations have confirmed dozens of cases in what's become the largest outbreak of monkeypox ever on the Continent, according to the German military.

The U.S. and Canada each have at least five confirmed or presumed cases so far. Belgium just introduced a mandatory 21-day quarantine for monkeypox patients. The WHO convened an emergency meeting this weekend via video conference to look at the virus, identify those most at risk and study its transmission. The organization will hold a second global meeting on monkeypox next week to more thoroughly study the risks and treatments available to fight the virus. While the virus itself is not a sexually transmitted infection, which are generally spread through semen and vaginal fluids, the most recent surge in cases appears to have been spread among men who have sex with other men, WHO officials said, emphasizing that anyone can contract monkeypox.

"Many diseases can be spread through sexual contact. You could get a cough or a cold through sexual contact, but it doesn't mean that it's a sexually transmitted disease," said Andy Seale, who advises the WHO on HIV, hepatitis and other sexually transmitted infections. The virus is spread through

close contact with people, animals or material infected with the virus. It enters the body through broken skin, the respiratory tract, the eyes, nose and mouth. Though human-to-human transmission is believed to occur through respiratory droplets as well, that method requires prolonged face-to-face contact because the droplets cannot travel more than a few feet, according to the CDC.

"This is a virus that is super stable outside the human host, so it can live on objects like blankets and things like that," Dr. Scott Gottlieb told NBC in a separate interview Monday on "Squawk Box." "And so you can see situations where people become reluctant to try on clothing things like that, where it could become disruptive in areas where this is spreading, like New York City."

He said to expect more confirmed cases in the U.S. in the coming weeks as doctors and public health officials reevaluate patients who have presented with symptoms and the virus continues to spread. Monkeypox is a disease caused by a virus in the same family as smallpox but is not as severe, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. However, monkeypox can kill as many as 1 in 10 people who contract the disease, based on observations in Africa, according to the CDC. The vaccine used to prevent smallpox appears to be about 85% effective in guarding against monkeypox in observational research in Africa, WHO officials said. But the vaccines aren't widely available so it's important to reserve them for populations that are most at risk, said Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO's leading epidemiologist on zoonotic diseases. She said the WHO will be teaming up with vaccine makers to see if they can ramp up production.

Early symptoms of monkeypox include a fever, headache, back pain, muscle aches and low energy, WHO officials said. Then that progresses to a rash on the face, hands, feet, eyes, mouth or genitals that turns into raised bumps or papules, that then become blisters that often resemble chicken pox. Those can then fill with a white fluid, becoming a pustule, that breaks and scabs over. Gottlieb described it as a disabling disease that can last two to four months and has a lengthy 21-day incubation period.

"I don't think this is going to be uncontrolled spread in the same way that we tolerated the Covid-19 epidemic," Gottlieb said. "But there is a possibility now this has gotten into the community if in fact it's more pervasive than what we're measuring right now, that becomes hard to snuff out" (Courtesy cbs.com)

Monkeypox typically requires very close contact to spread — most often skin-to-skin contact, or prolonged physical contact with clothes or bedding that was used by an infected person.

By contrast, COVID-19 spreads quickly and easily. Coronavirus can spread simply by talking with another person, or sharing a room, or in rare cases, being inside a room that an infected person had previously been in.

"Transmission is really happening from close physical contact, skin-to-skin contact. It's quite different from COVID in that sense," said Dr. Maria Van Kerkhove, an infectious disease epidemiologist with the WHO. The classic symptom of monkeypox is a rash that often begins on the face, then spreads to a person's limbs or other parts of the body.

"The incubation from time of exposure to appearance of lesions is anywhere between five days to about 21 days, so can be quite long," said Dr. Boghuma Kabisen Titani, an infectious disease physician and virologist at Emory University in Atlanta. The current outbreak has seen some different patterns, experts say — particularly, that the rash begins in the genital area first, and may not spread across the body. Either way, experts say, it is typically through physical contact of that rash that the virus spreads.

"It's not a situation where if you're passing someone in the grocery store, they're going to be at risk for monkeypox," said Dr. Jennifer McQuiston of

The FDA has two vaccines already approved for use against smallpox.

One, a two-dose vaccine called Jynneos, is also approved for use against monkeypox. About a thousand doses are available in the Strategic National Stockpile, the CDC says, and the company will provide more in the coming months.

"We have already worked to secure sufficient supply of effective treatments and vaccines to prevent those exposed from contracting monkeypox and treating people who've been affected," said Dr. Raj Panjabi of the White House pandemic office, in an interview with NPR.

Related

Monkeypox Is Not Like COVID-19 — That Is Good



Spallanzani infectious disease hospital Director Francesco Viazzi talks to reporters at the end of a news conference Friday in Rome. (Photo/Andrew Medichini/AP)

The recent headlines about a sudden emergence of an unusual disease, spreading case by case across countries and continents may, for some, evoke memories of early 2020. But monkeypox is not like COVID-19 — and in a good way.

Health officials worldwide have turned their attention to a new outbreak of monkeypox, a virus normally found in central and west Africa that has appeared across Europe and the U.S. in recent weeks — even in people who have not traveled to Africa at all.

But experts say that, while it's important for public health officials to be on the lookout for monkeypox, the virus is extremely unlikely to spin out into an uncontrolled worldwide pandemic in the same way that COVID-19 did.

"Let's just say right off the top that monkeypox and COVID are not the same disease," said Dr. Rosamund Lewis, head of Smallpox Secretariat at the World Health Organization, at a public Q&A session on Monday.

For starters, monkeypox spreads much less easily than COVID-19. Scientists have been studying monkeypox since it was first discovered in humans more than 50 years ago. And its similarities to smallpox mean it can be combated in many of the same ways. As a result, scientists are already familiar with how monkeypox spreads, how it presents, and how to treat and contain it — giving health authorities a much bigger head start on containing it.

Scientists already know how it spreads, and it's different than COVID.

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the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in a briefing Monday.

The people most likely to be at risk are close personal contacts of an infected person, such as household members or health care workers who may have treated them, she said. With this version of virus, people generally recover in two to four weeks, scientists find, and the death rate is less than 1%.

Monkeypox is less contagious than COVID-19

One factor that helped COVID-19 spread rapidly across the globe was the fact that it is very contagious. That's even more true of the variants that have emerged in the past year. Epidemiologists point to a disease's R₀ value — the average number of people you'd expect an infected person to pass the disease along to. For a disease outbreak to grow, the R₀ must be higher than 1. For the original version of COVID-19, the number was somewhere between 2 and 3. For the omicron variant, that number is about 8, a recent study found.

Although the recent spread of monkeypox cases is alarming, the virus is far less contagious than COVID-19, according to Jo Walker, an epidemiologist at Yale School of Public Health.

"Most estimates from earlier outbreaks have had an R₀ of less than one. With that, you can have clusters of cases, even outbreaks, but they will eventually die out on their own,"

they said. "It could spread between humans, but not very efficiently in a way that could sustain itself onward without constantly being reintroduced from animal populations."

That's a big reason that public health authorities, including the WHO, are expressing confidence that cases of monkeypox will not suddenly skyrocket. "This is a containable situation," Van Kerkhove said Monday at the public session.

Because monkeypox is closely related to smallpox, there are already vaccines

Monkeypox and smallpox are both members of the Orthopox family of viruses. Smallpox, which once killed millions of people every year, was eradicated in 1980 by a successful worldwide campaign of vaccines. The smallpox vaccine is about 85% effective against monkeypox, the WHO says, although that effectiveness wanes over time.

"These viruses are closely related to each other, and now we have the benefit of all those years of research and diagnostics and treatments and in vaccines that will be brought to bear upon the situation now," said Lewis of the WHO.

Some countries, including the U.S., have held smallpox vaccines in strategic reserve in case the virus ever reemerged. Now, those can be used to contain a monkeypox outbreak.

The virus usually spreads from person to person through sustained, skin-to-skin contact with someone with rashes or lesions.

"What we're talking about here is close contact. It's not a situation where if you're passing someone in the grocery store, they're going to be at risk for monkeypox," McQuiston said. And while anyone can contract or spread the virus, health officials say many of the people affected identify as gay or bisexual men.

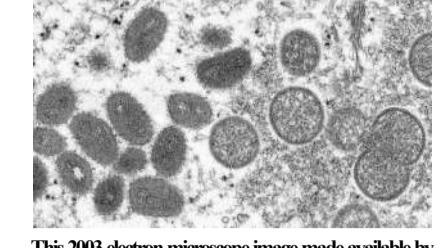
"Monkeypox appears to be circulating globally in parts of the gay community," says Dr. John Brooks, medical epidemiologist with the CDC's division of HIV prevention.

In the recent case, Brooks says the rash "is showing up in different parts of the body than we'd typically expect to see," in some cases in the genital area. He wants health care providers to be aware that people coming in for a sexually transmitted disease evaluation may need to be checked for monkeypox, if there's been an exposure. (Courtesy npr.org)

BUSINESS

Related

Monkeypox likely isn't much of a threat to the public, a White House official says



The 2013 electron microscope image made available by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows mature, oval-shaped monkeypox virus particles, left, and spherical immature particles, right.

Cynthia S. Goldsmith, Russell Regner/CDC via AP

The risk posed to the U.S. general public from ongoing outbreaks of monkeypox cases reported in Europe, the U.K. and Canada is low, a White House official told Morning Edition on Monday. Dr. Raj Panjabi, Senior Director for Global Health Security and Biodefense at the National Security Council, says the fewer than 10 cases seen in the United States so far have not been severe — "flu-like symptoms and a rash which can be painful but resolves in two to four weeks" — and aren't likely to get much worse.

"Historically in countries with weaker health care systems less than 1% of patients have died from this milder strain," Panjabi said. "We have access to vaccines and even treatments here in the U.S., and so the risk we believe is substantially lower."

In dozens of cases from other U.S. outbreaks over the past 20 years, all patients fully recovered, he said.

So far in the U.S., one case of monkeypox has been confirmed in Massachusetts. A few more are suspected in New York, Florida and Utah, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The cases all involve people who have recently travelled abroad.

"We're in the early days of this response," said Capt. Jennifer McQuiston, deputy director of the CDC's division of high consequence pathogens and pathology, at a briefing. "It's likely that there are going to be additional cases reported in the United States."



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Southern **DAILY** Make Today Different

New Alief Neighborhood Center Represents Future Cultural Reality Of Area

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

Alief Neighborhood represents the future reality for cultural, ethnic and economic diversity in urban centers.



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 11903 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

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