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Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

Southern Daily News is published by Southern News Group Daily

Publisher: Wea H. Lee
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Thursday, June 11 2019 | www.today-america.com | Southern News Group

U.S. coronavirus cases now over 2 million: Reuters tally



FILE PHOTO: Gavin Roberts wears his father's police hat as he looks at the flag-draped casket of his father, Glen Ridge Police Department officer Charles Roberts, at his funeral service, after the 45-year-old father of three died of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

(Reuters) - Total U.S. coronavirus cases surpassed 2 million on Wednesday, according to a Reuters tally, as health officials urge anyone who took part in massive protests for racial justice to get tested.

Nationally, new infections are rising slightly after five weeks of declines, according to a Reuters analysis. Part of the increase is due to more testing, which hit a record high on June 5 of 545,690 tests in a single day but has since fallen, according to the

COVID-Tracking Project <https://covidtracking.com>.

Recent increases in cases are likely a result of more people moving about and resuming some business and pleasure activities as all 50 states gradually reopen. Huge nationwide protests with no social distancing after the May 25 the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police could lead to another spike in cases in coming weeks.

Health officials believe the first U.S. coronavirus cases appeared in January, and the nation recorded 1 million cases by April 28. So far in June, there have been an average of 21,000 new cases a day compared with an average of 30,000 a day in April and 23,000 a day in May, according to a Reuters tally.

Total U.S. coronavirus-related deaths have surpassed 112,000, also the most in the world.

On May 12, the World Health Organization (WHO) advised governments that before reopening, the rate of people testing positive for the coronavirus should remain at 5% or lower for at least 14 days.

U.S. rates of positive test results have fluctuated between 4% and 7% nationally and have not met those guidelines, although many individual states have. (Open tmsnr.rs/2WTOZDR in an external browser for a Reuters interac-

tive)

Some states were still reporting positive rates above the WHO threshold last week, with Maryland at 8%, Utah at 9%, Nebraska at 9%, Virginia at 9%, Massachusetts at 11% and Arizona at 12%.

At the peak of the outbreak in April, 25% to 50% of tests came back positive.

Amazon pauses police use of facial recognition tech for a year

(Reuters) - Amazon.com Inc (AMZN.O) on Wednesday said it was implementing a one-year moratorium on police use of its facial recognition software, reversing its long-time support of selling the technology to law enforcement.

Civil liberties activists have voiced concern that facial recognition could lead to unjust arrests during demonstrations against police brutality, racial injustice and the death of George Floyd.

Critics also have questioned the software's accuracy, pointing to a past study showing Amazon's "Rekognition" service struggled

to identify the gender of individuals with darker skin tones. Amazon has taken issue with that research

The company, which sells cloud computing technology via its Amazon Web Services division, said in a statement it has pushed for regulations to ensure the software was used ethically.

"We hope this one-year moratorium might give Congress enough time to implement appropriate rules, and we stand ready to help if requested," Amazon said.

Congress has been weighing possible regulations of facial recognition for months. On Monday, technology giant IBM (IBM.N) wrote members to say it no longer is offering the software generally. Media reports indicate that Amazon's "Rekognition" has not been a commercial blockbuster. It has sold the service to law enforcement in Oregon and Florida, and it reportedly has marketed it to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Firms such as France's Idemia and Japan's NEC, in the facial recognition business for much longer, are known to have far more contracts.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

06/10/2020

CORONAVIRUS DIARY

Better Tomorrow

the first time we have ever faced this challenge. More than one hundred twenty thousand people have now lost their lives to the pandemic in the U.S. and two million confirmed cases have been reported. We are the richest country in the world. Why have we handled this crisis so poorly?

We saw George Floyd resting peacefully. Now we as a nation need to look ahead. How can we correct our mistakes with kindness and love and not with hate?

We all are looking for a better tomorrow to come.



Thousands gathered in Houston, Texas, yesterday to bid a final farewell to George Floyd the man who sparked outrage and protests across the world. The people are demanding change and they hope the funeral isn't the end, but instead will mark the beginning of that widespread call for change.

shoot someone. In some cities, they are asking to defund police departments or greatly reduce their budgets.

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner says he will sign an executive order that will ban the use of chokeholds by officers in the city of Houston. Turner said in the city you have to give a warning before you

We are so glad to see the reopening of the City of New York. Governor Cuomo rode the subway with other New Yorkers in the past one hundred days. New Yorkers have been suffering enough. The Wall Street market represents the U.S. and the world economy.

In this coronavirus pandemic, the whole nation has endured such pain, and this is



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Publisher Southern Daily Wea H. Lee

Stay Safe!

BUSINESS

Wash Your Hands!

Computer Models Suggest Pandemic Lockdowns Saved Many Millions From Dying Of COVID-19

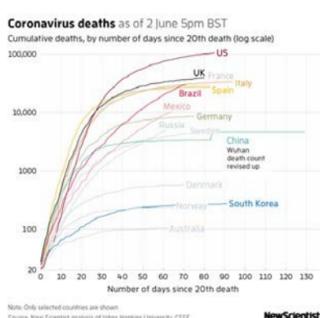


Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Two new papers published in the journal Nature say that lockdowns put in place to slow the spread of the coronavirus were highly effective, prevented tens of millions of infections and saved millions of lives.

"Our estimates show that lockdowns had a really dramatic effect in reducing transmission," says Samir Bhatt, a senior lecturer at the Imperial College London's School of Public Health, who worked on one of the papers published in Nature. Bhatt's team analyzed infection and death rates in 11 European nations through May 4. They estimate that an additional 3.1 million people in those countries would have died if lockdowns had not been put in place. "Without them we believe the toll would have been huge," Bhatt says. In addition to the paper from Bhatt and his colleagues, Nature also published a separate study from the Global Policy Lab at the University of California, Berkeley. That study analyzed lockdowns in China, South Korea, Iran, France, Italy and the United States.

It found that the lockdowns in those six countries averted 62 million confirmed cases.



For example, in the U.S. through the first week of April, there were officially just over 360,000 confirmed cases nationwide. Without lockdowns and other interventions, the researchers at Berkeley calculate that the U.S. would have had nearly 14 times as many by April 6: more than 5 million confirmed cases. To put this in perspective, the U.S. now, two months later, is hitting the 2 million mark.

Solomon Hsiang, director of the Global Policy Lab, says these unprecedented shelter-in-place orders came at an extreme economic cost. Yet when government officials were ordering them, it was unclear exactly how significant the social benefits would be. "The value of these studies you're seeing today is that they're demonstrating what the benefits of this policy are," Hsiang said in a press call discussing the studies. "They averted tens of millions of additional infections and millions of deaths." The two studies used different methods to calculate the number of cases averted by the lockdowns. Bhatt's team looked at reported deaths to calculate community transmission that occurred weeks before and used the change in death numbers over time to track how much the lockdowns suppressed transmission. Hsiang's group at Berkeley used economic models usually used to examine how specific policies impact economic growth. They looked at how daily transmission growth rates shifted as lockdowns went into effect. Despite their different approaches, both groups came up with similar findings.



Both sets of researchers also caution that as lockdowns start to ease around the world, public health officials still have very limited tools to combat the coronavirus. Testing is more widely available. Social distancing has become standard at many shops. Most large gatherings at sporting events and concerts remain banned. But the virus continues to circulate. The vast majority of people are still susceptible to COVID-19. Maria Van Kerkhove, an epidemiologist with the World Health Organization, this week warned that the world shouldn't ease up in its efforts against this pandemic.

"I know many of us would like this to be over and I know many situations are seeing positive signs. But it is far from over," she said. "We need everyone to focus on the job at hand, which is stopping this pandemic, suppressing transmission and saving lives. There's a lot more work to do. Let's celebrate the successes but let's remain focused on the remaining work that needs to be done because unfortunately this is far from over." Bhatt also warns that as places come out of lockdown, transmission could rapidly flare back up again without some measures in place to check it.

Tracking The Pandemic: Are Coronavirus Cases Rising Or Falling In Your State?



Nearly 2 million people in the U.S. have tested positive for the coronavirus and more than 110,000 have died. The growth in new cases and deaths overall has at least temporarily slowed, but that pattern hasn't been consistent across the country. New hot spots are emerging as others subside. Many states began relaxing some social distancing measures in May, and health leaders are watching for signs that the virus is starting to spread more aggressively. In the graphics below, explore the trend in new cases in your state to see whether cases are rising, falling or staying level. "We are not saying that, you know, the country needs to stay locked down forever. But it's a cost/benefit situation," Bhatt says. "The longer you stay in lockdown, the less infections you have. People aren't moving around. When you release lockdown and you go for milder interventions, economic stability can return to some degree, but you then have the

rise of infections that is possible. What we are saying is that some degree of intervention [against the virus] needs to be in place." The researchers from both papers say that people need to understand how much of an impact the lockdown measures have been having. Hsiang at Berkeley says that as difficult as this year has been, things would have been much worse if millions of people around the globe hadn't stayed home. "Without these policies deployed," Hsiang says. "We would have lived through a very different April and May." A period so bad, he says, "that we believe it's probably almost unimaginable." (Courtesy <https://www.npr.org/>)



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Editor's Choice



Medics load a person into an ambulance at the Life Care Center of Kirkland



A man raises his hand in solidarity as the coffin of George Floyd, whose death in Minneapolis police custody has sparked nationwide protests against racial inequality, is seen in a horse-drawn carriage as it enters the Houston Memorial Gardens...



Passengers on board the Grand Princess cruise ship off San Francisco watch while a U.S. military helicopter hovers above the deck



Family and guests attend the funeral service for George Floyd at The Fountain of Praise church, in Houston, Texas, June 9, 2020. David J. Phillip/Pool via REUTERS



A mannequin with a protective face mask is seen at a shop after further cases of coronavirus were confirmed in Barcelona



Actors Channing Tatum and Jamie Foxx attend a funeral service for George Floyd. David J. Phillip/Pool via REUTERS



Colombian Migration office staff wear protective face masks to avoid contracting coronavirus, at El Dorado international airport in Bogota



Woman looks at an image of Mona Lisa with a face mask after further cases of coronavirus were confirmed in Barcelona

Gen. Charles Q. Brown Was Approved With A 98-to-0 Vote Senate Confirms Top General To Lead Air Force As First Black Service Chief In U.S. History



Gen. Charles Q. Brown was confirmed by the Senate on June 9 as Air Force chief of staff. (Kevin Dietsch/AP)

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

The Senate confirmed Gen. Charles “CQ” Brown Jr. as the next chief of staff of the Air Force on Tuesday, setting the stage for the veteran fighter pilot to become the first black service chief in U.S. military history. Brown, commander of Pacific Air Forces for the last two years, will replace Gen. David L. Goldfein, who has led the service since July 2016. Brown is expected to lead the service as it prepares for the rise of China as an adversary, incorporates artificial technology into operations and sheds a portion of its mission as the Pentagon’s new Space Force is established as its own service branch.

The confirmation also makes Brown the second African American officer to sit on the Joint Chiefs of Staff since Chairman Gen. Colin Powell.

The 98-to-0 vote was a blowout approval for the four-star general. Vice President Mike Pence presided over the historic vote. President Donald Trump, who nominated Brown in March, hailed the general on Twitter.

“My decision to appoint @usairforce General Charles Brown as the USA’s

first-ever African American military service chief has now been approved by the Senate,” Trump said, though the tweet came before the confirmation vote. “A historic day for America! Excited to work even more closely with Gen. Brown, who is a Patriot and Great Leader!”



Gen. Charles Q. Brown. | Kevin Dietsch/Pool via AP

Brown’s nomination had been in the works for months, yet the vote came amid nationwide protests following the death of George Floyd in police custody. Top Air Force officials led the way in speaking out over the past week and calling for dialogue on racism. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Kaleth Wright, the service’s top enlisted leader, became the first senior military official to speak out,

and was followed by outgoing Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein. Brown, who is currently the commander of Pacific Air Forces, delivered an emotional message Friday about his experience as a black airman.

In addition to becoming the first African American service chief, Brown will be the most senior African American Pentagon leader since Powell chaired the Joint Chiefs from 1989 to 1993.

“I’m thinking about how full I am with emotion, not just for George Floyd but for the many African Americans that have suffered the same fate as George Floyd,” Brown said. “I’m thinking about a history of racial issues and my own experiences that didn’t always sing of liberty and equality.

“Without clear-cut answers, I just want to have the wisdom and knowledge to lead during difficult times like these,” Brown said of his nomination to be the service’s top officer. “I want the wisdom and knowledge to lead, participate in and listen to necessary conversations on racism, diversity and inclusion.”



Gen. Charles Q. “CQ” Brown, Jr., Pacific Air Forces commander and the nominee to be the next Air Force chief of staff, arrives at Yokota Air Base, Japan, Nov. 13. (Senior Airman Jessica Avallone/U.S. Air Force)

On the Senate floor, Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska), who previously held up Brown’s nomination, praised him as “the right man at the right time.”

“He is literally on the front lines in implementing the National Defense Strategy, which has a focus on great power competition, particularly China as the pacing threat to our nation for the next 50 to 100 years,” Sullivan said. “Gen. Brown is in that battle right now,

front-lines every day.”

Brown was commissioned as an Air Force officer in 1984. He is an F-16 fighter pilot and instructor who has notched more than 2,900 flying hours and 130 combat hours. Brown has served in Asia, Europe and the Middle East. He was an aide to the Air Force secretary and chief of staff during several rotations through the Pentagon. Prior to taking over Pacific Air Forces, Brown led U.S. Air Forces in the Middle East and was deputy commander of U.S. Central Command, which oversees U.S. military operations in the region. For a complete list of Gen. Charles Q. Brown’s accomplishments, please go to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Q_Brown_Jr.

Related

Commissioned after graduating from Texas Tech University in 1984, Brown has served the Air Force for 35 years. The distinguished four-star general has nearly 3,000 flying hours, including 130 combat hours, primarily in F-16 Fighting Falcons. Brown has commanded a fighter squadron, two fighter wings, and US Air Forces Central Command. He has also served as the deputy commander for US Central Command, according to his Air Force biography.



Gen. Charles Q. Brown

Speaking before the Senate Armed Services Committee early last month, Brown said that he was committed to seeing the Air Force achieve “irreversible momentum towards the implementation of the National Defense Strategy and an integrated and more lethal joint force.”

Responding to Brown’s confirmation Tuesday, President Donald Trump

tweeted that he was looking forward to working with the general, characterizing him as “a Patriot and Great Leader.”

Brown’s confirmation Tuesday comes at a time of tensions and unrest across the US following the death of George Floyd, a Black man who died on Memorial Day after a Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

Floyd’s death ignited protests in dozens of cities, with demonstrators calling for an end to racial injustice and police brutality.

Amid the unrest, Brown spoke up and delivered a powerful message on race in America and in the military.



Gen. Charles “CQ” Brown, current head of Pacific Air Forces, has been selected to be the next chief of staff of the Air Force.

Reflecting on personal experiences and race, Brown said that he was thinking about his historic nomination to be the first African American to serve as the Air Force chief of staff.

“I’m thinking about the African Americans that went before me to make this opportunity possible,” he said.

He added that he was thinking about the “immense expectations that come with this historic nomination,” particularly in light of current events.

“I’m thinking about how my nomination provides some hope but also comes with a heavy burden,” he said, acknowledging that he “can’t fix centuries of racial discrimination in our country.”

He expressed a hope for “the wisdom and knowledge to lead during difficult times like these.” (Courtesy <https://www.airforcetimes.com/>)

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