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Jeffrey Epstein friend Ghislaine Maxwell arrested on sex abuse charges



FILE PHOTO: Ghislaine Maxwell, longtime associate of accused sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein, speaks at a news conference on oceans and sustainable development at the United Nations in New York, U.S. June 25, 2013 in this screengrab taken from United Nations TV file

(Reuters) - Ghislaine Maxwell, the former girlfriend and longtime associate of the late disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein, was arrested on Thursday on U.S. charges of luring underage girls so that Epstein could sexually abuse them.

The FBI arrest of the British socialite is the latest twist in the mystery of Epstein, who went from a high school math teacher to high-flying lifestyle of private Caribbean islands and powerful connections that his victims say allowed him to abuse minors with impunity.

Maxwell, 58, was arrested in Bradford, New Hampshire, where she had been laying low since December, the FBI said.

Who is Ghislaine Maxwell, the Epstein confidant detained by the FBI?

'Breath of relief': Jeffrey Epstein accusers welcome Ghislaine Maxwell's arrest
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Maxwell appeared briefly by video from jail at a hearing in New Hampshire federal court, where a judge ordered her to face the criminal charges in New York. She did not enter a plea, and bail was not determined.

She spoke briefly, answering "yes" when asked if she knew her rights. Her lawyer, Larry Vogelmann, declined

further comment on her behalf.

Prosecutors said she was a flight risk and asked that she be detained without bail. They said she faces up to 35 years in prison.

She is charged with four criminal counts related to procuring and transporting minors for illegal sex acts and two of perjury, according to the indictment by federal prosecutors in New York.

"Maxwell was among Epstein's closest associates and helped him exploit girls who were as young as 14 years old," said acting Manhattan U.S. Attorney Audrey Strauss. "Maxwell played a critical role in helping Epstein to identify, befriend and groom minor victims for abuse. In some cases, Maxwell participated in the abuse herself."

Epstein was awaiting trial on federal charges of trafficking minors between 2002 and 2005 when he was found hanged in an apparent suicide while in a New York City jail in August. He was 66.

Previously, he pleaded guilty in Florida to state charges of solicitation of prostitution from a minor in a 2008 deal with prosecutors that was widely criticized as too lenient.

FILE PHOTO: Ghislaine Maxwell, longtime associate of accused sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein, speaks at a news con-

ference on oceans and sustainable development at the United Nations in New York, U.S. June 25, 2013 in this screengrab taken from United Nations TV file footage. UNTV/Handout via REUTERS

The indictment accuses Maxwell of luring the girls beginning in 1994 through 1997 by asking them about their lives, schools and families and taking them shopping or to movies.

Strauss called Maxwell's alleged acts "the prequel" to Epstein's abuse.

After Maxwell won the girls' trust, the indictment alleges, she would try to "normalize sexual abuse" by discussing sexual topics or by undressing in front of them or being present when they were undressed.

Epstein's alleged abuse included touching their genitals, placing sex toys on their genitals and having the girls touch Epstein while he masturbated.

Strauss said the abuse took place at Epstein's homes in New York, Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Palm Beach, Florida, as well as Maxwell's residence in London.

PROSECUTORS SEEK ANSWERS

Epstein has been linked socially to several powerful figures, from President Donald Trump to former President Bill Clinton and Britain's Prince Andrew.



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Boeing communications chief resigns over decades-old article on women in combat

SEATTLE (Reuters) - Boeing Co's (BA.N) communications chief Niel Golightly abruptly resigned on Thursday, following an employee's complaint over an article the former U.S. military pilot wrote 33 years ago arguing women should not serve in combat.

FILE PHOTO: Signage of The Boeing Company in Seattle, Washington, U.S. June 29, 2020. REUTERS/Karen Ducey "My article was a 29-year-old Cold War navy pilot's misguided contribution to a debate that was live at the time," Golightly said in a statement accompanying Boeing's announcement.

"My argument was embarrassingly wrong and offensive. The article is not a reflection of who I am; but nonetheless I have decided that in the interest of the company I will step down," Golightly said.

His exit leaves Boeing trying to fill the crucial communications role for the fourth time in less than three years at a time when it is battling to shore up its brand after the prolonged safety grounding of its Boeing 737 MAX jetliner.

Golightly's departure after just six months on the job, during which he was said to be introducing sweeping changes, followed the board's review of an internal anonymous ethics complaint that flagged his article.

He decided to step down after discussions with Boeing Chief Executive Dave Calhoun and others, Golightly told employees in an internal email seen by Reuters.

His resignation comes at a time when U.S. employers have been more responsive to complaints related to sex and racial equality and diversity fueled in part by the #MeToo movement against sexual harassment, and anti-racist activism.



FILE PHOTO: Signage of The Boeing Company in Seattle, Washington, U.S. June 29, 2020. REUTERS/Karen Ducey "My article was a 29-year-old Cold War navy pilot's misguided contribution to a debate that was live at the time," Golightly said in a statement accompa-

Boeing says it has a strong commitment to improving diversity, though the number of senior women on its executive council has fallen from five to two since the beginning of 2019, according to Boeing's annual reports and website.

Although changes in communications leadership rarely make news, the job has become the industry biggest hot seat, with Boeing coming under fire for the tone of early state-

ments over the 737 MAX crisis, sometimes under pressure from its lawyers.

Golightly declined to comment beyond the statement issued by Boeing. According to an excerpt on the U.S. Naval Institute website, the December 1987 article titled "No Right to Fight" said: "At issue is not whether women can fire M-60s, dogfight MiGs, or drive tanks. Introducing women into combat would destroy the exclusively male intangibles of war fighting and the feminine images

of what men fight for - peace, home, family."

Golightly told staff in an email on Thursday that the exclusion of women at the time was "government policy and broadly supported in society. It was also wrong."

Stay Home!

BUSINESS

Wear Mask!

County Commissioners Voted 3-2 To Extend Disaster Declaration, Including Mask Order

Harris County Extends Disaster Declaration, Emergency Powers For Judge Until August 26



Harris County voted to extend the county's disaster declaration until August 26, granting Judge Lina Hidalgo continued emergency powers until then as local businesses petition courts for temporary restraining order.

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

Harris County Commissioners voted last Tuesday afternoon to extend a coronavirus disaster declaration to August 26, 2020. Passed on a 3-2 party-line vote, the initial request from Hidalgo specified an extension through July 15, 2020, but Commissioner Adrian Garcia (D-Precinct 2) motioned to extend to the end of July, and then Commissioner Rodney Ellis (D-Precinct 1) motioned to extend through the end of August. Hidalgo suggested extending only until the August 26 date since the commissioners court would be meeting on August 25. Prior to those motions, Commissioner Jack Cagle (R-Precinct 4) had said while he did not necessarily oppose the extension, he had concerns regarding some of the actions, expenditures, and contracts approved under the judge's emergency authority. Cagle said he had at times not been made aware of the actions taken until after implementation, including a \$4.2 million contract to begin hosting jury calls at NRG Arena.



"We didn't know any of the details about the movement out to NRG, that there was a big trial that was about to occur out there, that we were going to start transporting inmates back and forth to NRG, and what jail standards were going to be followed with," said Cagle. "I understand that you may or may not have signed a contract for \$4.2 million involving this process...with some renewal terms." A second example Cagle offered was a contract for Recruitment Consulting Services that the judge had signed under coronavirus emergency powers. He said that the decision could have waited 72 hours for a commissioners court discussion.

Cagle requested the county attorney's office to submit a listing of all the purchase orders and contracts that had been approved under executive orders so that the court and the public would know what was being done under emergency powers. Hidalgo defended her decisions saying that the contract for the consulting services had been discussed months ago and had been on the previous meetings' agendas, and that there was an urgent need to fill positions under coronavirus conditions. The judge also defended the contract to use NRG to house jury proceedings, saying "The wheels of justice are turning too slowly...we had this discussion with... [Justice Management Institute] last time." "They needed this to be signed," she added.



She did say the commissioners should have been notified by the Justice Administration Department about the plan and would ask why that had not been communicated.

Hidalgo asserted that Cagle's request for the listing of executive actions was already being met since a list was being provided just before each commissioners court meeting. In voting against the extension, Commissioner Steve Radack (R-Precinct 3) said, "I just want to say that clearly some of the decisions you've made had nothing to do with an emergency."

"This stuff is ramrodded through, some of it, without any question, that had nothing to do with an emergency, so I'm a no." Last week, Judge Hidalgo had upgraded the county's status to "Level 1-Red," saying there was a "[s]evere and uncontrolled transmission," and asked all residents to stay home.

Use of the county's emergency alert system to warn residents to stay home did draw some criticism from other leaders,

such as Lt. Governor Dan Patrick who took to social media to call the alert "over the top."

"During these serious times, we need calm leaders not panic alerts that scare people," wrote Patrick.



Texas Lt. Governor Dan Patrick

The Houston and Harris County region has reported an increase in coronavirus cases and hospitalizations, but hospital leadership has said that hospital capacity is not currently "an immediate concern." For June 29, Texas DSHS reported hospitalizations had increased, but new cases/positive rates were down overall. Harris County's coronavirus dashboard reports there have been 376 deaths and there are currently 19,955 active cases. According to the latest estimates, there are more than 4.7 million residents in the county. (Courtesy <https://thetexan.news/>)

A spokesperson for Judge Lina Hidalgo told KPRC 2's Syan Rhodes that since the mask order falls under this disaster declaration, it too is extended until August 26.

"We don't know the full nature and impact of this virus...I would rather give you and your team the runway and capacity to navigate this pandemic," said Harris County Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia in explaining his support for the extension.

Harris County Fire Marshal Laurie Christensen told the Commissioners that since her office opened a complaint portal on their website to allow people to report errant businesses, they've received 857 complaints against 643 businesses that allegedly were not enforcing the mask mandate. So far, no fines or citations have been issued as a result of those complaints.

But a group of Harris County business owners took the mask order to court, asking a judge to stop it.



"We've had one of our clients who had the fire marshal come to this particular place of business and said 'if you don't force folks to wear a mask then we are going to come and fine you.' Well that person chose to just shut down their business until this litigation could be resolved," said Jared Woodfill, an attorney representing the business owners. According to Judge Hidalgo's Office, commissioners usually extend the declaration for two or three weeks at a time. Judge Hidalgo said she's been in contact with the governor's office, asking for authority to enforce a stay home, work safe order.

The mask mandate went into effect Monday, June 22, and was set to expire Tuesday if the Harris County Commissioners did not vote to extend it.

It said businesses must require employees and customers to wear masks. They must ensure social distance is maintained and sick employees stay home.

Businesses posted signs at entrances and many read, "No mask, no service." Owners who did not enforce the order faced a \$1,000 fine per violation. (Courtesy <https://www.click2houston.com/>)



Editor's Choice



Lily Hendrickx, 83, a resident at the Belgian nursing home 'Le Jardin de Picardie' enjoys hugs and cuddles with Marie-Christine Desoer, the director of the residence, through a wall made with plastic sheets, in Peruwelz, Belgium. REUTERS/Yves Herman...MORE



President Trump swings a wooden baseball bat as he attends a "Spirit of America Showcase" event in the Cross Hall of the White House in Washington. REUTERS/Tom Brenner



People detained by riot police during a march against national security law at the anniversary of Hong Kong's handover to China from Britain, in Hong Kong. REUTERS/Tyrone Siu



Crews stand around the statue of Confederate general Stonewall Jackson after it was removed from the pedestal in Richmond, Virginia. REUTERS/Julia Rendleman



Students of Sam Khok school wearing face masks and face shields are seen inside old ballot boxes repurposed into partitions as they attend a class after the Thai government eased isolation measures and introduced social distancing to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, as schools nationwide reopen, at Pathum Thani province, Thailand. REUTERS/Athit Perawongmetha



Britain's Prince Charles looks at a Gloucestershire Old Spot pig with her piglets during a visit to Cotswold Farm Park in Guiting Power near Cheltenham, Britain. Kirsty Wigglesworth/Pool



Smoke and dust rise from the site of an air strike on the outskirts of Sanaa, Yemen. REUTERS/Khaled Abdullah



Fans inside the stadium before the Bulgarian Cup Final in Sofia. Thousands of spectators broke social distancing rules by standing close together, shouting chants and not wearing masks that were handed out for free at the Bulgarian Cup Final ...

Swine Flu Virus With Human ‘Pandemic Potential’ Found In Pigs In China



The new flu strain is similar to the swine flu that spread globally in 2009

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

A swine flu virus emerged recently in China and is carried by pigs, but can infect humans, it has been reported. The researchers are concerned that it could mutate further so that it can spread easily from person to person, and trigger a global outbreak.

While it is not an immediate problem, they say, it has “all the hallmarks” of being highly adapted to infect humans and needs close monitoring.

As it’s new, people could have little or no immunity to the virus. The scientists write in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences that measures to control the virus in pigs, and the close monitoring of swine industry workers, should be swiftly implemented.

Pandemic threat

A bad new strain of influenza is among the top disease threats that experts are watching for, even as the world attempts to bring to an end the current coronavirus pandemic. The last pandemic flu the world encountered - the swine flu outbreak of 2009 - was less deadly than initially feared, largely because many older people had some immunity to it, probably because of its similarity to other flu viruses

that had circulated years before.



Nasal swabs from more than 30,000 pigs in China over 7 years found an increase in an avianlike influenza virus that has swapped genes from several strains.

That virus, called A/H1N1pdm09, is now covered by the annual flu vaccine to make sure people are protected. The new flu strain that has been identified in China is similar to 2009 swine flu, but with some new changes.

So far, it hasn’t posed a big threat, but Prof Kin-Chow Chang and colleagues who have been studying it, say it is one to keep an eye on.

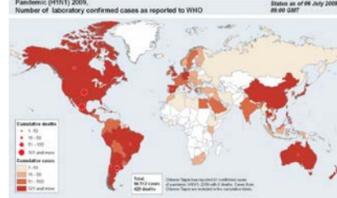
How worried should we be?

The virus, which the researchers call G4 EA H1N1, can grow and multiply in the cells that line the human airways. They found evidence of recent infection in people who worked in abattoirs and the swine

industry in China when they looked at data from 2011 to 2018.

Current flu vaccines do not appear to protect against it, although they could be adapted to do so if needed. Prof Kin-Chow Chang, who works at Nottingham University in the UK, told the BBC: “Right now we are distracted with coronavirus and rightly so. But we must not lose sight of potentially dangerous new viruses.”

While this new virus is not an immediate problem, he says: “We should not ignore it.” A World Health Organization spokeswoman said: “Eurasian avian-like swine influenza virus are known to be circulating in the swine population in Asia and to be able to infect humans sporadically. Twice a year during the influenza vaccine composition meetings, all information on the viruses is reviewed and the need for new candidate vaccine viruses is discussed. We will carefully read the paper to understand what is new.



“It also highlights that we cannot let down our guard on influenza; we need to be vigilant and continue surveillance even during the COVID-19 pandemic.” (Courtesy <https://www.bbc.com/>)

What the world doesn’t need now is a pandemic on top of a pandemic. But a new finding that pigs in China are more and more frequently becoming infected with a strain of influenza that has the potential to jump to humans has infectious disease researchers worldwide taking serious notice.

When multiple strains of influenza viruses infect the same pig, they can easily swap genes, a process known as “reassortment.” The new study, published today in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, focuses on an influenza virus dubbed G4. The virus is a unique blend of three lineages: one similar to strains found in European and Asian birds, the H1N1 strain that caused the 2009 pandemic, and a North American H1N1 that has genes from avian, human, and pig

influenza viruses.

The G4 variant is especially concerning because its core is an avian influenza virus—to which humans have no immunity—with bits of mammalian strains mixed in. “From the data presented, it appears that this is a swine influenza virus that is poised to emerge in humans,” says Edward Holmes, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Sydney who studies pathogenic. “Clearly this situation needs to be monitored very closely.”



Influenza viruses frequently jump from pigs to humans, but most do not then transmit between humans. Two cases of G4 infections of humans have been documented and both were dead-end infections that did not transmit to other people.



“The likelihood that this particular variant is going to cause a pandemic is low,” says Martha Nelson, an evolutionary biologist at the U.S. National Institutes of Health’s Fogarty International Center who studies pig influenza viruses in the United States and their spread to humans. But Nelson

notes that no one knew about the pandemic H1N1 strain, which jumped from pigs to people, until the first human cases surfaced in 2009.

“Influenza can surprise us,” Nelson says. “And there’s a risk that we neglect influenza and other threats at this time” of COVID-19.

The new study offers but a tiny glimpse into swine influenza strains in China, which has 500 million pigs. While Nelson thinks the predominance of G4 in their analysis is an interesting finding, she says it’s hard to know whether its spread is a growing problem, given the relatively small sample size. “You’re really not getting a good snapshot of what is dominant in pigs in China,” she adds, stressing the need for more sampling in the nation’s pigs.

In addition to stepping up surveillance, Sun says it makes sense to develop a vaccine against G4 for both pigs and humans. Webster says at the very least, the seed stock to make a human vaccine—variants of a strain that grow rapidly in the eggs used to make a flu vaccine—should be produced now. “Making the seed stock is not a big deal, and we should have it ready,” Webster says. (Courtesy <https://www.sciencemag.org/>)

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