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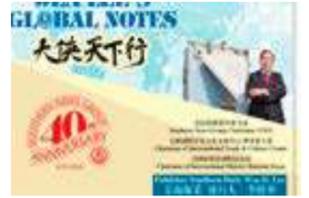
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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Biden to ask U.S. lawmakers to shun autocracy in Georgia voting rights push

ATLANTA, Jan 11 (Reuters) - President Joe Biden on Tuesday sought to revive U.S. voting rights reforms and fight new state laws that critics say hinder Black and Hispanic voters as his Democrats face a dwindling opportunity before congressional elections this year.

Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris flew to Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthplace of Atlanta, where they will speak at Clark Atlanta University and Morehouse College, two historically Black schools. They are girding themselves for tough 2022 congressional elections that could strip them of their majority and the chance to change federal voting laws.

Many civil rights activists say Biden should have done more during his first year in office to push for reforms, and some, including Georgia's Stacey Abrams, won't attend his speech.

Biden told reporters at the White House on Tuesday that he spoke to Abrams and despite a schedule mix-up, they are "on the same page."

The speech will be Biden's second in as many weeks warning about the health of democracy in the United States. On Jan. 6, he targeted former President Donald Trump's "web of lies" about the 2020 election, blaming his Republican predecessor for the deadly attacks on the U.S. Capitol a year before.

Trump continues to say that the 2020 election was stolen by Biden's Democrats through voter fraud, despite recounts and investigations that found no evidence to back the claim. Since then, Republican lawmakers in 19 states have passed dozens of laws making it harder to vote. Critics say these measures disproportionately affect minorities.

Biden wants to build public support for proposed reforms to strengthen voting rights, particularly the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. Both have so far withered under opposition from Republicans, who argue they would impose questionable national standards on local elections.

"This is one of those defining moments. It really is," Biden told reporters as he left Washington. "The risk is making sure people understand just how important this is."



Medical staff members treat patients inside the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) ward at the Interior Ministry Hospital in Warsaw, Poland, November 8, 2021. REUTERS/Kacper Pempel

Too soon to treat COVID-19 like flu as Omicron spreads - WHO

COPENHAGEN, Jan 11 (Reuters) - The Omicron variant of COVID-19 is on track to infect more than half of Europeans, but it should not yet be seen as a flu-like endemic illness, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Tuesday.

Europe saw more than 7 million newly-reported cases in the first week of 2022, more than doubling over a two-week period, WHO's Europe director Hans Kluge told a news briefing.

"At this rate, the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation forecasts that more than 50% of the population in the region will be infected with Omicron in the next 6-8 weeks," Kluge said, referring to a research centre at the University of Washington.

Fifty out of 53 countries in Europe and central Asia have logged cases

of the more infectious variant, Kluge said.

Evidence, however, is emerging that Omicron is affecting the upper respiratory tract more than the lungs, causing milder symptoms than previous variants.

Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said it may be time to change how it tracks COVID-19's evolution to instead use a method similar to flu, because its lethality has fallen. [read more](#)

That would imply treating the virus as an endemic illness, rather than a pandemic, without recording every case and without testing all people presenting symptoms.

But that is "a way off", WHO's senior emergency officer for

Europe, Catherine Smallwood, said at the briefing, adding that endemicity requires a stable and predictable transmission.

"We still have a huge amount of uncertainty and a virus that is evolving quite quickly, imposing new challenges. We are certainly not at the point where we are able to call it endemic," Smallwood said.

"It may become endemic in due course, but pinning that down to 2022 is a little bit difficult at this stage.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

01/11/2022

President Carter's Warning And Worry



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At nearly 100 years old President Carter recently published an article in the New York Times saying that one year ago a violent mob guided by unscrupulous politicians stormed the U.S. Capitol building and almost succeeded in preventing the democratic transfer of power. All four former presidents have condemned their actions and affirmed the legitimacy of the 2020 election. However, one year later, the promoters of the lie that the election was stolen have taken over one

political party and stoked distrust in our electoral system.

President Carter said in the article that according to a survey centered on American life, 36 percent of Americans, almost 100 million adults, agreed that the traditional American way of life is disappearing so fast that we may have to use force to save it.

After he left the White House, President Carter founded the

Carter Center and worked on promoting free trade and orderly elections across the globe. He led dozens of election observation missions in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

Today we are seeing a big challenge to our political system. President Carter suggested that we are all Americans and we have common hopes for our communities and want our country to thrive. Violence has

no place in our politics, he said.

The gap between Republicans and Democrats is getting deeper and deeper. More than 40 percent of Republicans think that violence against the government is sometimes legitimate.

This is very sad. As the leader of democratic countries, our system is going in the wrong direction.



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



Women are pictured inside a quarantine centre for coronavirus patients in Navi Mumbai, India, January 11. REUTERS/Francis Mascarenhas



Serbian tennis player Novak Djokovic practices ahead of the Australian Open at Melbourne Park in Melbourne, Australia, January 11, 2022. Tennis Australia/Scott Barbour/Handout via REUTERS



A woman looks out of a window during a news conference at the scene of a fire at a multi-level apartment building in the Bronx borough of New York City, New York, January 10. REUTERS/Carlo Allegri



Monster Energy Yamaha Rally Team's Adrien Van Beveren in action during stage 8 of the Dakar rally in Saudi Arabia, January 10. REUTERS/Hamad I Mohammed



A man collects oranges from a tree amid fog during morning hours in Peshawar, Pakistan, January 10. REUTERS/Fayaz Aziz



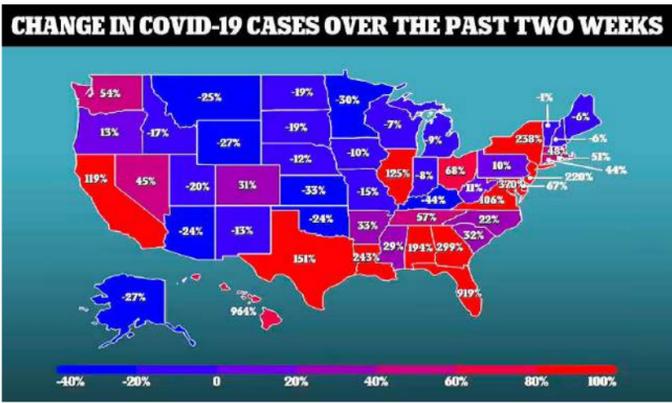
Olympic Cougar Project members work to replace the GPS collar on Lilo, a wild cougar, near Port Angeles, Washington, December 14. REUTERS/Stephanie Keith

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

BUSINESS

COVID-19 Cases TRIPLE Over The Past Two Weeks With A 964% Increase In Hawaii And A 238% Jump In New York

Omicron Continues To Ravage The Nation



Key Point

- *Covid cases have increased by over 200% - or three-fold - over the past two weeks in seven U.S. states as Omicron continues spread in the U.S.
*Hawaii has been the hardest struck, with cases increasing nearly ten-fold over the past two weeks
*New York is experiencing the highest rate of positive cases in the U.S., with 167 out of every 100,000 residents testing positive every day
*Cases are declining in states like Alaska and Michigan where the death rate is among the highest in the nation, signaling the recent surge may be ending

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

The U.S. is experiencing yet another winter Covid surge, with the situation expected to only worsen over in the weeks following the Christmas and New Year's holidays. According to data from Johns Hopkins University, the U.S. is averaging 181,948 Covid cases every day, with that number set to increase in the coming days due to reporting lags during the holiday season.

(106), Maryland (104), Massachusetts (104) and Ohio (104). In the Empire State, the number of New Yorkers hospitalized with COVID ballooned over Christmas, with more than 5,500 people spending their holidays inside one of New York's many hospital facilities - the largest increase since February.

Some of these states are experiencing intense case growth in recent weeks as well. In Maryland - which has begun reporting

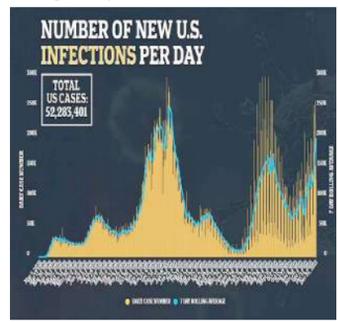
cases again after a technical glitch prevented the state from doing so in recent weeks - has seen cases increased by 370 percent. In New Jersey, the number of new daily cases have increased by 220 percent - more than tripling over 14 days. Other states among the nation's leaders in Covid case rates have all also seen infections jump by 50 percent or more over the past two weeks.



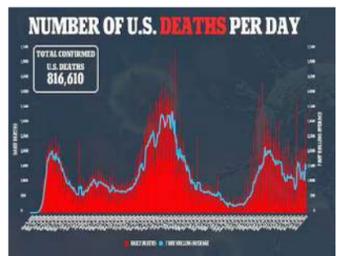
States in the west that were previously recording little change in cases, if not outright declines, have seen cases jump as well. California, the nation's most populous state, has witnessed a doubling of cases over the past two weeks.

The national leaders in Covid deaths are all states where cases are declining. This signals that the virus may be burning out in the U.S. as well - as deaths usually lag behind cases by around two weeks.

among the leaders in death rate - with it 1.27 deaths per every 100,000 residents being third in the country - though cases are down nine percent over the past two weeks.



Many other states in the north and Midwest are recording declining cases as well, as the early fall surges called by cold weather are starting to recede. Kansas leads the country in largest two week case decline, with infections dropping by 33 percent in 14 days.



New York COVID hospitalizations top 5,500 for the first time since February, with child admissions rising FIVE-FOLD as Gov Kathy Hochul urges parents to vaccinate children between the ages of 5-11

5,500 people spending their holidays inside one of New York's many hospital facilities - the largest increase since February. Gov. Kathy Hochul announced on Monday that statewide hospitalizations stand at 5,526 - the highest total since February 23 and nearly a 190 percent increase since November 1, according to NBC 4 New York.

'You can see the hospitalizations are continuing to spike upward, [but] you can get some comfort in seeing that we're not where we were in April 2020, we're not where we were in January of 2021,' she said. 'But it is going upwards and that is something that we are very cognizant of and were anticipating and preparing for.'

Across the state, 70 children were hospitalized with COVID during the week of December 5 to 11, but so from December 19 to 23, that number jumped to 184. And in New York City, there were 22 children in the hospitals for COVID from December 5 to 11, but by December 19 to 23 there were 109 children hospitalized with the virus.



Gov. Kathy Hochul on Monday announced that hospitalizations have increased over Christmas

'Many people thought - continue to think - that children don't become infected with COVID. This is not true,' she said. 'Children become infected and some will be hospitalized.'

(Article Continues Below)

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COMMUNITY

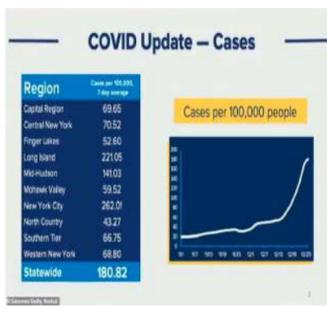
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Omicron Continues To Ravage The Nation

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

Meanwhile, New York State saw 26,737 people test positive for the virus - though Hochul said on Monday she expects the number to rise up to 20,000 or more by the time Tuesday's data comes in, as more people will get tested following the Christmas holiday.

'public-facing location' at the place of employment.



New York State saw 26,737 people test positive for the virus - though Hochul said on Monday she expects the number to rise up to 20,000 or more by the time Tuesday's data comes in, as more people will get tested following the Christmas holiday.

Fines for noncompliance start at \$1,000 and could rise with further infractions. 'Today [is] a historic day in New York City. We're implementing the strongest vaccine mandate in the country, all private sector employees today,' de Blasio said on MSNBC's Morning Joe on Monday morning.

Also on Monday, the city's vaccine mandate for children went into effect, with all New Yorkers 12 and older required to have received two doses of the COVID vaccine and 82.8 percent are fully vaccinated. Among children, however, just 41.3 percent are fully vaccinated, 12.5 percent are partially vaccinated and 46.3 percent are not yet vaccinated.

Related CDC: Omicron is now the dominant strain of coronavirus in the U.S. and brings new challenges to the global COVID fight

the most dominant strain in the US, accounting for over 73% of new coronavirus cases less than three weeks after the first was reported, according to estimates posted Monday by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



In this aerial view, cars line up at a Covid-19 testing site at Tropical Park in Miami, Florida on December 21, 2021. - Days out from Christmas, Americans are facing long lines to get tested for the coronavirus amid a new surge driven by the Omicron variant and a dire shortage of options for this vital screening measure.

As of Monday, 48 US states have reported cases of Omicron, according to public statements from hospital systems and state officials, as well as Puerto Rico and Washington, DC. The only states that have not reported cases of Omicron are Oklahoma and South Dakota.



People wait in line to get tested for COVID-19 at a mobile testing site in Times Square on Friday, Dec. 17, 2021, in New York.

Scientists are still waiting on data on the severity of Omicron in the US compared to other variants. But it is expected to put added strain the health care system and health care workers especially.

Experts discuss what's next Dr. Francis Collins, the outgoing director of the National Institutes of Health, told CNN's Anderson Cooper on Friday that the Omicron variant could result in as many as a million new cases a day.



Flight crew from Air China arrive in hazmat suits in the international terminal at Los Angeles International Airport on December 3, 2021, as Los Angeles County reported its first case of the new Covid-19 variant, omicron.

Covid-19 hospitalizations trended upward over the past month as medical facilities in some parts of the country have been inundated with patients infected with the Delta variant.

lieve to be more contagious though most cases so far appear to be mild - may push some strained health care systems to the brink. 'It is quite likely that we are going to see in some sections of the country, a significant stress on the hospital system as well as on the health care workers who are getting exhausted by all of this,' Dr. Anthony Fauci told ABC's 'This Week' on Sunday.

Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, has said traveling and gathering for Christmas and New Year's can be done safely among those who are inoculated, and getting booster shots into the arms of vaccinated Americans remains paramount to increase antibody response.



People walk by groups of people lined-up to get tested for Covid-19 in Times Square on Dec. 5, 2021 in New York City. With the newly discovered omicron strain of Covid, health officials are urging people to get a vaccination or a booster and get tested for Covid.

Omicron will lead to a spike in cases in the upcoming weeks, but those who are vaccinated and unvaccinated will have a "stark difference" in experience. US Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy told anchor Tony Dokoupil on "CBS Mornings" Monday.