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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

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Exclusive: U.S., Russia have used their military hotline once so far during Ukraine war

WASHINGTON, Nov 28 (Reuters) - A communications line created between the militaries of the United States and Russia at the start of Moscow's war against Ukraine has been used only once so far, a U.S. official told Reuters.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that the United States initiated a call through the "deconfliction" line to communicate its concerns about Russian military operations near critical infrastructure in Ukraine.

Reuters is the first to report on the use of the deconfliction line, beyond regular testing.

Few details are known surrounding the specific incident that led to the call on the line, which connects the U.S. military's European Command and Russia's National Defense Management Center.

The official declined to elaborate but said it was not used when an errant missile landed in NATO-member Poland on Nov. 15, killing two people. The blast was likely caused by a Ukrainian air defense missile but Russia was ultimately responsible because it started the war in late February, NATO said.

Although the U.S. official declined to specify which Russian activity raised the U.S. alarm, there have been publicly acknowledged incidents involving Russian fighting around critical Ukrainian infrastructure.

These include Russian operations around Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, Europe's biggest, which is under Russian control.

Ukraine has also voiced concerns Russia might blow up the Nova Kakhovka dam, which holds back an enormous reservoir in southern Ukraine. Bursting the dam would send a wall of water flooding settlements below, including towards the strategic regional capital Kherson, which Ukrainian forces recaptured on Nov. 11.

U.S.-Russia communications have been in the spotlight since the start of Russia's invasion of its neighbor, given the grave risk that a miscalculation by either side could cause a direct conflict between the nuclear-armed nations.

SEVERAL WAYS TO COMMUNICATE

The deconfliction line is just one of several ways the U.S. and Russia militaries still have to communicate.

Other military channels include rare high-level talks between U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu. The top U.S. and Russian generals, U.S. Army General Mark Milley and Russian General Valery Gerasimov, have also spoken on two occasions since the war started, his office said.

White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan and CIA Director Bill Burns have also had contact with Russian officials.

Still, U.S.-Russia relations are at their lowest point since the Cold War and the U.S. State Department said on Monday that Moscow postponed talks in Cairo aimed at resuming nuclear weapons inspections. The Russian foreign ministry confirmed the talks were postponed. Neither side provided a reason.

Asked for comment on the deconfliction line, the Pentagon said only



that it retained several channels to "discuss critical security issues with the Russians during a contingency or emergency for the purposes of preventing miscalculation, military incidents, and escalation."

"We are encouraged by recent senior DoD calls with Russian counterparts and believe continued dialogue is critical," a Department of Defense spokesperson said.

Neither Russia's embassy in Washington nor its defense ministry in Moscow responded to requests for comment.

NOT A 'COMPLAINT' LINE

When it was announced in March, the Pentagon said the deconfliction line was created to avoid any inadvertent clashes in NATO airspace or on the ground.

"It's not meant to be an all-purpose complaint line where we can just pick up the phone and register concerns about what Russia's doing in Ukraine," a senior U.S. defense official said at the time.

During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union maintained such hot lines at different levels.

Alexander Vershbow, a former U.S. ambassador to Moscow and a former senior Pentagon and NATO official, said the latest deconfliction line was meant to focus on daily operations - as opposed to the more strategic conversations between top officials like Milley and Gerasimov.

Vershbow drew a comparison to the far more active deconfliction line for Syria, where U.S. and Russian military forces sometimes operate in the same airspace or terrain.

"We've seen this in Syria, where having the direct operational channel can at least clarify intentions during a fast-moving situation where maybe Washington is asleep," Vershbow told Reuters.

The deconfliction line is tested twice daily with calls conducted in Russian, the U.S. official told Reuters. A Russian speaker from the U.S. European Command initiates those calls out of Wiesbaden, Germany, the official said.

Wiesbaden is also the location of the Pentagon's new Security Assistance Group-Ukraine, or SAG-U, which remotely supports the Kyiv government's defense against Russian troops.

U.S. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, have previously said that early in the conflict planners believed the deconfliction line could be useful if the United States needed to evacuate Americans from Russian-occupied territory in Ukraine.

When the war began, the United States thought Russia might be able to quickly capture Ukrainian territory, trapping American citizens before they had a chance to leave.

One official had speculated it also could have been used if a Russian fighter jet chased a Ukrainian aircraft into Polish airspace, or if a Russian missile crossed NATO airspace.



美南電視 15.3

每周一至五每晚7點專題節目

每晚7點播出
專題節目

每天一至五下午6:30播出《美南新聞聯播》

- 每周一晚7點：主持人：黃梅子，《生活》節目（《生活故事會》、《丁師傅私房菜》和《修車師姐》三個單元輪流播出）
- 每周二晚7點：主持人：陳鐵梅，《美南時事通》
- 每周三晚7點，主持人：王潔，《美南時事通》、《美南名人堂》
- 每周四晚7點，主持人：Sky，《子天訪談錄》或馬健《J&J論壇》
- 每周五晚7點，主持人：蓋軍，《美南時事通》

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主持人: 黃梅子



主持人: 陳鐵梅



主持人: 王潔



主持人: 馬健



主持人: Sky



主持人: 蓋軍

WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

11/26/2022

Welcome State Representative Angie Chen Button Visiting Houston



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NEW WEBSITE

ANGIE CHEN
BUTTON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE



Asian American State Representative Angie Chen Button is a member of the Texas House of Representatives representing District 112. She assumed office in 2009. She ran for re-election and won the election on November 8, 2022.

Rep. Button earned her Masters Degree from the University of Texas in Dallas. She works as Marketing Manger for Texas Instruments and is a CPA.

Button was assigned to the position of Chairwoman of the International Relations & Economic Development Committee which is a very important position.

We would like to express our warm welcome Rep. Button and also hope to contribute some suggestions.

When we look at today's situation in our

community we are facing inflation and an economic downturn soon. At present, the relationship between China and the United States is deteriorating. In the meantime, if the new speaker McCarthy insists on visiting Taipei, this trip could cause a crisis in the Taiwan Strait again.

We want our Representative Button to express our concerns to the Republican Party. We all need peace and not war.



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



A damaged bus is seen by the sea, following a landslide on the Italian holiday island of Ischia, Italy. REUTERS/Guglielmo Mangiapane



Spain's Alvaro Morata celebrates scoring their first goal against Germany during the FIFA World Cup. REUTERS/ Kai Pfaffenbach



A boy looks on as Palestinian Islamic Jihad militants march in a rally marking the 35th anniversary of the movement's foundation, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip October 4. REUTERS/Ibraheem Abu Mustafa



A demonstrator confronts security forces as people protest regarding violence against stray dogs in Istanbul, Turkey. REUTERS/Umit Bektas



People gather for a vigil and hold white sheets of paper in protest of COVID-19 restrictions, as they commemorate the victims of a fire in Urumqi, as outbreaks of the coronavirus disease continue in Beijing, China. REUTERS/Thomas Peter



A woman attends a protest at Catalunya square in support of Iranian women and against the death of Mahsa Amini in Barcelona, Spain October 4. REUTERS/Nacho Doce

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

BUSINESS

U.S. Extends Temporary Legal Status Of 337,000 Immigrants Through 2024 Amid Court Battle

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



Activists and immigrants with temporary protected status march toward the White House on Feb. 23, 2021, in Washington, D.C., in a call for Congress and the Biden administration to pass immigration reform legislation.

The Biden administration on Thursday said it would extend the deportation protections and work permits of an estimated 337,000 immigrants from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Nepal and Honduras through the summer of 2024, preempting a court decision that could have led to their legal status expiring next year.



But in its notice on Thursday, DHS said immigrants from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Nepal and Honduras would get to keep their work permits and deportation protections at least 365 days after the department is allowed to end the TPS programs in question, or until

June 30, 2024 — whichever date comes later. The June 30, 2024, extension also applies to certain Haitian and Sudanese immigrants, but they are also eligible to apply for work permits and deportation protections under expansions of TPS programs for Haiti and Sudan announced by the Biden administration that are not affected by the litigation in federal court.

"DHS is well aware of the importance of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) in providing stability to people's lives," a DHS spokesperson said in a statement to CBS News on Thursday. As of the end of 2021, 241,699 Salvadorans, 76,737 Hondurans, 14,556 Nepalis and 4,250 Nicaraguans were enrolled in the TPS program, according to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) data.

TPS allows beneficiaries to live and work in the country without fear of deportation, but it does not provide them a path to permanent residency or citizenship. Those who lose their TPS protections could become eligible for deportation, unless they apply for, and are granted, another immigration benefit.

As part of its immigration crackdown, the Trump

administration tried to terminate TPS programs for hundreds of thousands of immigrants from El Salvador, Haiti, Nicaragua, Sudan, Honduras and Nepal. But those terminations were blocked in federal courts by lawsuits that argued the terminations were rooted in racial animus and not properly justified.

In September 2020, however, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals gave the Trump administration the greenlight to end the TPS programs, saying courts could not review DHS decisions related to the policy. The ruling, however, did not take effect, because attorneys representing the TPS holders asked the court to consider rehearing the case "en banc," or with all active judges participating.



Ahilan Arulanantham, one of the attorneys representing TPS holders in the litigation, said Thursday's announcement was an "important victory." But he called it an "interim one."

"Despite today's extension, the Biden administration is still defending Trump's racist TPS termination decisions in court, which unless the Biden administration acts, will remain on the books," said Arulanantham, the co-director of the Center for Immigration Law and Policy at the UCLA School of Law.

Arulanantham called on the Biden administration to create new TPS programs for El Salvador, Nicaragua, Nepal and Honduras, just like it has done for Haiti and Sudan.

Democratic lawmakers have advocated for TPS holders to be allowed to apply for permanent residency as part of a proposal to legalize unauthorized immigrants who have lived in the U.S. for years. Many TPS holders have lived in the country for over two decades. The TPS program for El Salvador, for example, began in 2001.

But congressional Democrats and Republicans have not been able to forge an agreement on immigration for decades, and GOP lawmakers have in-

creasingly opposed creating legalization programs, absent changes to U.S. border policy. (Courtesy https://www.cbsnews.com/news/)

Related
Venezuelan Migration To The U.S. Border Decreased In October, But Overall Migrant Arrivals Remained High

Washington, DC — Recently announced U.S. immigration policies led to a significant reduction in Venezuelan migration to the U.S.-Mexico border in Oct., but overall migrant apprehensions remained high, propelled by the arrival of tens of thousands of Cubans and Nicaraguans, federal statistics released late Monday show.

U.S. immigration officials encountered migrants 230,678 times along the southern border last month, a 1.9% increase from September, according to the Customs and Border Protection data. Roughly 19% of those encounters involved repeat crossings by migrants who had been previously processed by U.S. border agents.



Venezuelan migrants were processed 22,044 times in Oct., a 35% decrease from the record high of 33,804 reported the previous month. The drop comes after the U.S. on Oct. 12 began expelling Venezuelans to Mexico under a public health order known as Title 42. The Biden administration also launched a program to allow up to 24,000 Venezuelans to enter the U.S. legally if they have U.S.-based financial sponsors.

But the drop in Venezuelan migration was offset by the arrival of 28,848 Cubans and 20,917 Nicaraguans, a monthly record for the latter nationality. Mexico has generally not allowed the U.S. to expel Cubans or Nicaraguans to its territory, prompting U.S. officials to allow most of them to seek asylum inside the country, since Cuba and Nicaragua do not accept regular U.S. expulsion flights.

Troy Miller, who was named acting CBP commissioner last weekend following the resignation of Chris Magnus, said migration from Cuba and Nicaragua continued to be at a "historic high" due to political and economic turmoil in both countries, which are ruled by repressive regimes.

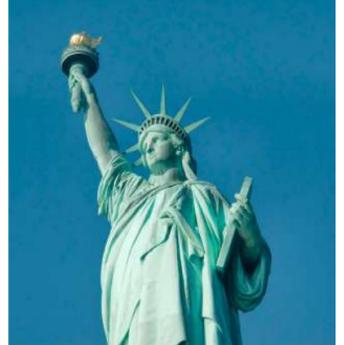
"This reflects the challenge that is gripping the hemisphere, as displaced populations flee authoritarianism, corruption, violence, and poverty," Miller said in his statement.



The tally of unique migrants from Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela in Oct. collectively exceeded the number of migrants from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador taken into U.S. border custody, continuing an unprecedented demographic shift that the U.S. has struggled to respond to, according to CBP calculations.

The U.S. carried out over 78,000 migrant expulsions in Oct. — including 5,855 expulsions of Venezuelans. Those expelled under Title 42 are barred from seeking asylum, which U.S. law allows migrants to request if they are on U.S. soil, regardless of whether they entered the country unlawfully. Migrants who are not expelled under Title 42 are processed under U.S. immigration law. Generally, that means they are transferred by Border Patrol to another agency, released with instructions to see a judge or an immigration office or processed under a fast-track deportation process known as expedited removal.

While the U.S. struggles to expel many migrants who are not from Mexico or Central America because of diplomatic and logistical reasons, the Biden administration has exempted several groups from Title 42, including unaccompanied children and asylum-seekers identified as vulnerable.



The numbers released Monday show the migration wave to the U.S.-Mexico border during President Biden's administration continues to defy pre-pandemic seasonal patterns, during which migrant arrivals peaked in the spring and declined in the hot summer months and the fall.

The statistics also suggest that migrant encounters along the southern border will continue to resemble, or perhaps surpass, the record levels reported in fiscal year 2022, when U.S. immigration officials encountered migrants nearly 2.4 million times, an all-time high. (Courtesy https://www.cbsnews.com/news/)

Southern DAILY Make Today Different

COMMUNITY

Covid Public Health Emergency And Flu Outbreak Attack The Nation U.S. Will Keep Covid Public Health Emergency In Place Until At Least Mid January

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



Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra answers questions during a Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee hearing to discuss reopening schools during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) at Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., September 30, 2021. (Photo Greg Nash | Pool | Reuters)

Key Points
HHS did not alert states of any intent to lift the public health emergency by a Friday notification deadline, which means it will remain in place at least through mid January.
The public health emergency, first declared in January 2020 and renewed every 90 days since, has had a vast impact on the U.S. health-care system.
The declaration has dramatically expanded public health insurance through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program.

The U.S. Covid public health emergency will remain in place past Jan. 11 after the federal government did not notify states or health-care providers on Friday of any intent to lift the declaration.
Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra has promised to give stakeholders 60 days notice before lifting the emergency declaration so they can prepare for a return to normal operations. In October, HHS extended the public health emergency until Jan. 11.
HHS did not provide a 60-day notice on Friday, which was the deadline to alert states and health-care providers if the federal government planned to lift the declaration on Jan. 11, according to a Health and Human Services spokesperson. Since HHS did not provide notification, the emergency will remain in place for at least another 60 days until mid January.
Public health officials are expecting another Covid surge this winter as people gather more indoors where the virus spreads easier. The future also remains uncertain as more immune evasive omicron subvariants become dominant in the U.S.



How the U.S. fares against Covid this fall and winter will help determine whether the emergency needs to be re-

newed again moving forward, Becerra told reporters in October.

The public health emergency, first declared in January 2020 and renewed every 90 days since, has had a vast impact on the U.S. health-care system. The declaration has dramatically expanded public health insurance through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program. Enrollment in these programs increased 26% during the pandemic to a record of more than 89 million people as of June.

HHS has estimated that as many as 15 million people could lose Medicaid or CHIP once the programs return to normal operations.

The emergency declaration has also given hospitals and other health-care providers more flexibility in how they operate. (Courtesy https://www.cnbc.com/)

Related
U.S. Flu Epidemic Is Official
The U.S. is officially in a flu epidemic, federal health officials say. Preparations Underway to deploy troops and ventilators if necessary



The U.S. has "crossed the epidemic threshold" when it comes to flu, federal health officials said Friday, as they outlined plans to deploy troops and FEMA personnel, and supplies like ventilators, if needed, in response to a nationwide surge of respiratory illnesses that also includes RSV and COVID.

U.S. flu hospitalizations are higher now than they've been at this point in every other flu season since 2010-2011, officials with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on a press call. The country is seeing a resurgence of non-COVID respiratory illnesses like flu, RSV, rhinovirus, and enterovirus, with background levels of COVID, according to Dr. José Romero, director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases.

Federal officials are monitoring hospital capacity throughout the U.S. and are "standing by to deploy additional personnel and supplies as needed." Dawn O'Connell, assistant secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response, said on the call.



If a state or jurisdiction exceeds its ability to care for patients, a team from the National Disaster Medical System may be deployed, she said, adding that response might also include personnel from the Department of Defense and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA. If extra supplies like ventilators or personal protective equipment are needed, they're available upon request from the Strategic National Stockpile, she added. No states had requested this level of support as of Friday.

Flu causing more severe illness in the young, elderly
Federal health officials on Friday painted a picture of some respiratory illnesses like flu surging in some areas of the country, with other areas seeing peaks of RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus infection. Cases of COVID and flu-like illnesses are occurring all areas, they said.



RSV is a common virus that hospitalizes thousands of infants and young children each year, though it can also pose a risk to the elderly. Symptoms can range from mild cold-like ailments like sneezing, sore throat, fever, and stuffy nose to pneumonia, which can prove fatal. Patients can quickly take a turn for the worst. In the Southeast U.S., nearly 20% of flu tests sent to a lab are returning positive—most of them for influenza A, which appears to be more severe in children and the elderly. In the Mid-Atlantic and Midwest regions, an early flu season is also causing severe illness in those age groups, according to Romero. The second influenza-related pediatric death of the season was recently reported, he added.

But flu isn't the country's only problem when it comes to respiratory illnesses, nor is COVID. Eight out of 10 regions of the country are seeing levels of RSV "significantly higher than those seen at the same time in previous years." And levels of "influenza-like" illness, defined as a fever with cold-like symptoms or sore throat, are also high for the time of year, Romero added.



An alert to health care providers throughout the U.S. will soon be issued, detailing best practices regarding testing and treatment for, and prevention of, the variety of respiratory illnesses being seen en masse so early this season, he said. He advised parents of children who have trouble breathing, who appear to be blue, who are experiencing chest or muscle pain, who are dehydrated (no urine for eight hours is one sign), and/or who are not alert or interactive when awake to seek immediate medical attention.

O'Connell encouraged all Americans to cover their coughs. And she encouraged those at high risk for illness—like infants and young children, those 65 and older, pregnant individuals, and those with certain chronic health conditions—to stay away from people who are sick and wash their hands frequently, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



"People may choose to wear a well-fitting mask as an added precaution," she added. She also plugged antivirals like Tamiflu for flu and Paxlovid for COVID, though she emphasized that they must be taken shortly after symptom onset if they're going to blunt the impact of an infection.

California's Orange County is overwhelmed—and it's not alone

Earlier this week California's Orange County declared a health emergency due to an overwhelming surge in respiratory illness that's pushing pediatric hospitals to their limits.

Sky-high numbers of young patients are seeking emergency-room care in area children's hospitals for RSV, the flu, flu-like illnesses, and, to a lesser extent, COVID, the OC Health Care Agency said Monday. The emergency declaration allows the county to receive help from the state and federal governments, and to seek aid from nearby counties.



Children's Hospital of Orange County is seeing upwards of 400 children in its emergency department daily—a record high—and is using all available space to meet demands. It has activated a command center within the hospital to manage the high patient load, a spokesperson told Fortune in a Tuesday statement.

Southern California is far from alone, with pediatric hospitals all across North America experiencing similar struggles—and some even considering outdoor tents to house patients and calling in the National Guard for help. The vast majority—around 75%—of U.S. children's hospital beds are currently full, according to NBC News. To the north, Canada is seeing similar issues, with some pediatric hospitals canceling surgeries, according to media reports. Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, a pediatric hospital in Ottawa, was at 130% capacity for intensive care beds and 134% capacity for inpatient beds, respectively, last week, a Canadian TV outlet reported.



Fortune has repeatedly reached out to HHS over the past week and a half, inquiring as to the number of pediatric hospital beds occupied in the U.S., but has not received a response. But anecdotally, the figure has a ring of truth. Dr. Anita Patel, a critical care doctor at Children's National hospital in Washington, D.C., told Fortune on Tuesday. Patel is in contact with other East Coast pediatric hospitals, "and almost every single major one" is nearly full, she said.

Children's National has been operating close to capacity for over a month. It's formed an additional team of high-level ICU doctors to care for children who need ICU admission, but who must stay in the emergency room until a bed opens up, according to Patel.

The surge in pediatric patients was initially fueled by the common cold, but RSV quickly surpassed it. While levels of RSV have since plateaued, "the flu is really on a rapid rise in our region," she said, adding that her hospital hasn't recently seen a significant number of patients with COVID or other coronaviruses that can cause respiratory illness.



"I can honestly say that, unfortunately, with both RSV and the flu, we have had kids that needed to be intubated and have breathing tubes to help get through viral illness," she said.

"I've been a practicing ICU doctor for a decade now, and I think I can safely say this is one of the worst surges I've ever seen."

Doctors and public health officials have been keeping a close eye on the U.S. flu season this fall out of concern that the virus will strike early and hit children particularly hard, as it did in Australia this spring. While hospitalizations and deaths were nothing unusual there, cases of flu peaked earlier and higher. And children and teens, who usually fare well with the flu, bore the brunt. The majority of reported flu cases were among young people ages 0-14, according to an Oct. 9 report from the Australian government. (Courtesy https://fortune.com/)