

Not worth the time & effort!

Says Trump about daily virus briefing after disinfectant gaffe

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump tweeted Saturday that his daily coronavirus briefings were not worth his time, two days after sparking a furor by suggesting patients might be injected with disinfectant to kill an infection.

He appeared to confirm media reports that he was considering halting the briefings, which dominate early-evening cable television news for sometimes more than two hours, out of frustration with questions about his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"What is the purpose of having White House News Conferences when the Lamestream Media asks nothing but hostile questions, & then refuses to report the truth or facts accurately," Trump wrote.

"They get record ratings, & the American people get nothing but Fake News. Not worth the time & effort!"

On Thursday the US leader stunned viewers by saying doctors might treat people infected with the coronavirus by shining ultraviolet light inside their bodies, or with injections of household disinfectant.

After a strong rebuff of his suggestion by top medical experts and disinfectant manufacturers, Trump on Friday claimed he had been speaking "sarcastically."

But he limited that day's briefing to just 19 minutes, and did not take any questions from reporters.

And on Saturday, after 50 briefings over two months, the White House did not hold one at all.



People applaud to show their support for healthcare workers in front of Sibley Memorial Hospital in Washington, DC, on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

Strictly follow lockdown

Indian PM urges citizens as 1,990 cases recorded in last 24 hours

REUTERS, New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday appealed to citizens to strictly comply with a nationwide lockdown and maintain social distancing norms, as cases of coronavirus mounted steadily despite over a month-long curfew.

In a radio address, Modi said the country was in the midst of a "war" and urged hundreds of millions of citizens to sustain the "people driven" fight and not be misled into believing the spread of the virus has been brought fully under control.

"I will urge you that we should not be trapped into over-confidence and nurse the belief that in our city, in our village, in our streets, in our office, coronavirus has not reached and that is why it will



not reach," Modi said.

India's high population density, poor sanitation infrastructure, and high rates of internal migration has hastened the spread of the virus.

India recorded 1,990 coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours - its biggest single-day spike so far - taking the total to 26,496, including 824 deaths.

Forty-nine deaths linked to the highly contagious illness were reported from different parts of the country in the last 24 hours.

Modi imposed a lockdown of India's 1.3 billion people on March 25 but experts fear that the world's biggest lockdown has not been able to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

"We need to be careful that physical distancing, covering the face with a cover or a mask and washing our hands again and again will be the biggest medicine to fight this disease in the days to come," Modi said.

On Saturday, India allowed small shops in residential areas to reopen although with staff members reduced by half and there were expected to wear masks and gloves during work hours.

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VIRUS EQUIPMENT China eases restrictions on exports

REUTERS, Beijing

China is dropping a requirement that a number of key virus care products get domestic regulatory approval before export, as long as they are approved in the importing countries.

China had been mulling such extra approval at home since the end of March after several countries complained that Chinese-made test kits were inaccurate. The new ruling applies to products such as tests, medical masks, protective suits, infrared thermometers and ventilators.

Many countries around the world have been scrambling to buy or make enough personal protective equipment for medical staff and care workers at risk of infection, and also tests to trace contagion and identify people who can leave quarantine.



A woman wearing a protective mask lights a candle at a memorial, dedicated to firefighters and workers who died after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, during a night service amid the coronavirus outbreak, in Slavytch, Ukraine yesterday. Ukraine yesterday marked the 34th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster which was the world's worst nuclear accident.

All coronavirus patients in Wuhan now discharged

REUTERS, Shanghai

The Chinese city of Wuhan, where the global coronavirus pandemic began, now has no remaining cases in its hospitals, a health official told reporters yesterday.

The novel coronavirus is believed to have originated in a wet market in Wuhan and first emerged in December before spreading quickly worldwide. Some 2.83 million people have been reported to be infected globally and 197,872 have died, according to a Reuters tally.

"The latest news is that by April 26, the number of new coronavirus patients in Wuhan was at zero, thanks to the joint efforts of Wuhan and medical staff from around the country," National Health Commission spokesman Mi Feng said at a briefing.

The city had reported 46,452 cases, 56% of the national total. It saw 3,869 fatalities, or 84% of China's total.

Wuhan and the province of Hubei were put in lockdown near the end of January for more than two months. The city is still testing residents regularly despite relaxing the restrictions.

China's health authority had earlier reported 11 new coronavirus cases on the mainland on April 25, down from 12 the previous day, with no fatalities.

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

LATEST UPDATES

INFECTIONS NEAR 3 MILLION

The new coronavirus has claimed at least 202,994 lives since its outbreak in China in December, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP at 1100 GMT yesterday. More than 2,902,450 cases were registered in 193 countries and territories.

Of these cases, at least 791,700 are now considered recovered. The United States has the highest number of deaths with 53,934 out of 939,249 cases. Italy has the second highest toll with 26,384 deaths out of 195,351 cases, followed by Spain (23,190 deaths and 226,629 cases), France (22,614 deaths and 161,488 cases) and the United Kingdom (20,319 fatalities and 148,377 cases).

US RECORDS 2,494 MORE DEATHS

The United States recorded 2,494 more coronavirus deaths in the past 24 hours, according to figures reported Saturday night by Johns Hopkins University.

SAUDI RELAXES LOCKDOWN EXCEPT IN MAKKAH

Saudi Arabia yesterday partially eased a 24-hour curfew in place to combat the coronavirus pandemic, except for in hotspots including the Muslim holy city of Makkah. The curfew will be relaxed between 9am and 5pm and malls and retailers will be allowed to reopen in all regions of the kingdom until May 13.

UK PM TO RETURN TO WORK

Boris Johnson will return to work at the start of the week as pressure increases on the UK government over its handling of the coronavirus crisis which has claimed more than 20,000 lives. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab told Sky News that Johnson would be back in his Downing Street office today after recovering from the virus and was in "good spirits" and "raring to go."

CHINA SEIZES OVER 89M SHODDY FACE MASKS

China has confiscated over 89 million poor quality face masks, a government official said, as Beijing faces a slew of complaints about faulty protective gear exported worldwide. Demand for protective equipment has soared as nations across the globe battle the deadly coronavirus, which has infected around 2.9 million people.

SRI LANKA EXTENDS LOCKDOWN

Sri Lanka has reversed plans to end its virus lockdown today, extending it for another week after a spike in coronavirus infections including at a naval base. Within hours of announcing that the nationwide restrictions imposed on March 20 would be lifted, the government revoked the order and extended them until May 4.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Train likely belonging to Kim seen at resort town

AFP, Seoul

A train likely belonging to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has been spotted at a resort town in the country's east, satellite photos reviewed by a US-based think tank showed, as speculation persists over his health.

The train was parked at a station reserved for the Kim family in Wonsan on April 21 and April 23, the respected 38North website said in a report published Saturday.

38North cautioned that the train's presence "does not prove the whereabouts of the North Korean leader or indicate anything about his health".

"But it does lend weight to reports that Kim is staying at an elite area on the country's eastern coast," it said.

There has been growing conjecture about Kim's health since his conspicuous absence from the April 15 celebrations for the birthday of his grandfather Kim Il Sung, the regime's founder -- the most important day on the North Korean political calendar.

Kim has not made a public appearance since presiding over a meeting of the Workers' Party politburo on April 11 and inspecting drills by fighter jets at an air defence unit, which was reported by state media on April 12.

Daily NK, an online media outlet run mostly by North Korean defectors, has reported Kim underwent a cardiovascular procedure earlier this month and was

recovering at a villa in North Pyongan province.

Citing an unidentified source inside the country, it said Kim, who is in his mid-30s, had needed urgent treatment due to heavy smoking, obesity and fatigue.

South Korea, which is still technically at war with the North, has played down the report.



On Thursday, US President Donald Trump rejected reports that Kim was ailing.

On Thursday, citing an unidentified government official, South Korean broadcaster SBS reported that Kim appeared to have been in Wonsan for at least the past four days and would soon return to the public eye.

The report added that the military was monitoring Kim's train, which had been seen in Wonsan, while his personal jet -- frequently used by Kim on his trips to Wonsan -- remained in Pyongyang.

WAR IN YEMEN

Separatists declare self-rule in south

REUTERS, Aden

Yemen's main southern separatist group announced early yesterday it would establish self-rule in areas under its control, which the Saudi-backed government warned would have "catastrophic consequences".

The move threatens to renew conflict between the UAE-backed separatist Southern Transitional Council (STC) and the Saudi-backed government, nominal allies in Yemen's war, even as the United Nations is trying to secure a nationwide truce to confront the novel coronavirus.

The STC yesterday deployed its forces in Aden, the southern port which is the interim seat of the government ousted from the capital, Sanaa, by the Iran-aligned Houthi movement. Reuters journalists saw STC fighters in a column of pickup trucks and military vehicles riding down a main street in Aden.

The STC is one of the main groups fighting against the Houthis as part of a coalition led by Saudi Arabia. But the separatists, long backed by Saudi coalition partner the UAE, have clashed with government forces in the past.

In a statement, the STC announced emergency rule in Aden and all southern governorates, saying it would take control of Aden's port and airport and other state institutions such as the central bank.

The Saudi-backed government and southern regions of Shabwa, Hadhramaut and Socotra, among the few areas under coalition control, issued separate statements rejecting the declaration.

Yemen's FM Mohammed Al-Hadrami said the STC announcement constituted "a resumption of its armed insurgency" and a "rejection and complete withdrawal from the Riyadh agreement", a deal which ended a previous stand-off between the separatists and the government last year.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Date: 23/04/2020

Corrigendum of e-GP: Tender Notice (3rd)

Due to some unavoidable circumstances, following amendment has been made to the Tender ID No. 437197.

Sl. No.	ID No.	Name of supply	Field name	Old value	New value
1.	Tender ID 437197	Supply of Computer, Laptop, Printer, Multimedia Projector, UPS and other accessories (Package No. AF-G1)	Tender document last selling date & time	27 April 2020 17:00	18 May 2020 17:00
			Last date and time for tender security submission	28 April 2020 12:00	19 May 2020 12:00
			Tender closing date & time	28 April 2020 13:00	19 May 2020 13:00

All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

Sd/-
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