



Homeless people in Bangkok waiting for free meals. The global lockdown is most ruinous to the economies of developing countries.

U.S. Asks Spies To Trace Virus To Wuhan Lab

This article is by **Mark Mazzetti, Julian E. Barnes, Edward Wong and Adam Goldman.**

WASHINGTON — Senior Trump administration officials have pushed American spy agencies to hunt for evidence to support an unsubstantiated theory that a government laboratory in Wuhan, China, was the origin of the coronavirus outbreak, according to current and former American officials. The effort comes as President Trump escalates a public campaign to blame China for the pandemic.

Some intelligence analysts are concerned that the pressure from administration officials will distort assessments about the virus and that they could be used as a political weapon in an intensifying battle with China over a disease that has infected more than three million people across the globe.

Most intelligence agencies remain skeptical that conclusive evidence of a link to a lab can be found, and scientists who have studied the genetics of the coronavirus say that the overwhelming probability is that it leapt from animal to human in a nonlaboratory setting, as was the case with H.I.V., Ebola and SARS.

Mr. Trump's aides and Republicans in Congress have sought to blame China for the pandemic in part to deflect criticism of the administration's mismanagement of the crisis in the United States, which now has more coronavirus cases than any country. More than one million Americans have been infected, and more than 60,000 have died.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, a former C.I.A. director and the administration's most vocal hard-liner on China, has taken the lead in pushing American intelligence agencies for more information, according to current and for-

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Too Many Bodies, Too Fast, Put New York in Bind

By **ALAN FEUER** and **WILLIAM K. RASHBAUM**

The 40-foot trailer has been there for weeks, parked outside the Leo F. Kearns Funeral Home in Queens. Its refrigerator hums in an alley next to a check-cashing establishment. Thirty-six bodies, one atop the other, are stacked on shelves inside.

The funeral director, Patrick Kearns, has barely slept since the day he took charge of them. As he lies awake in the middle of the night, he knows there will be more.

“It weighs on you, having so many cases in your care,” he said. “The death rate is just so high, there’s no way we can bury or cremate them fast enough.”

With more than 18,000 announced fatalities and a total death toll that is almost certainly higher, the coronavirus crisis is the worst mass casualty event to

A Backlog at Morgues, Funeral Homes and Cemeteries

hit New York since the Spanish flu pandemic a century ago.

At the height of the outbreak in April, a New Yorker was dying almost every two minutes — more than 800 per day, or four times the city’s normal death rate. And though the daily toll has recently slowed, hundreds of bodies are still emerging each day from private homes and hospitals.

While hospitals bore the initial brunt of the crisis as sick people flooded emergency rooms, the sheer volume of human remains has pushed the system for caring for the dead to its limits, too: Hospital morgues, funeral homes, cemeteries and crematories are

all overflowing and backed up.

The scale of the problem was brought into sharp relief on Wednesday afternoon, when the police found dozens of decomposing bodies stashed inside two trucks outside a funeral home on Utica Avenue in Brooklyn. The owner, Andrew T. Cleckley, said he had nowhere else to put them, adding simply: “I ran out of space.”

What happened in Brooklyn appears to be an extreme case, and state health officials said on Thursday they would investigate the matter. But in the last two months, funeral home directors have begun to store bodies in viewing rooms and chapels, turning up their air-conditioning systems to avoid decomposition. Some are transporting bodies to other cities and states to be cremated.

Some hospitals ran out of body

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Patrick Kearns of Leo F. Kearns Funeral Home at the entrance of a makeshift morgue in Brooklyn.

As Beaches Grow Irresistible, States Scramble for Sensible Limits

This article is by **Patricia Mazzei, Shawn Hubler and Thomas Fuller.**

MIAMI — The salty breeze and ocean waves have beckoned stir-crazy residents of the coast back to their beloved beaches, social distancing norms be damned.

But how to prevent beach blankets and lawn chairs from becoming new founts of coronavirus infection has become a flash point

for governors in Florida, California and other coastal states, who must balance demands from constituents for relief from the escalating spring heat against the horrified reaction of the general public to photos of sweaty, swimsuit-clad bodies packed towel to towel.

Gov. Gavin Newsom of California stepped in on Thursday to shut down the beaches in Orange County, rolling back earlier attempts at giving people there a

Teeming Ocean Shores Spur Anger Online

chance to stroll along the shore while staying a safe distance away from one another. Broad swaths of sand were packed over the weekend with crowds, with many people flocking from neighboring Los

Angeles and San Diego Counties, where the beaches remained off-limits.

“This disease isn’t going away,” Mr. Newsom said at a news conference, noting that the pandemic had claimed at least 95 lives in the state in the past 24 hours.

The county-by-county approach in California and Florida, perhaps the two states most defined by their iconic coastlines,

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JOB LOSSES SPIKE EVEN AS MILLIONS ARE NOT COUNTED

Billions Slide Down Ladder That Took Decades to Climb

By **MARIA ABI-HABIB**

She was just 12 when she dropped out of school and began clocking in for endless shifts at one of the garment factories springing up in Bangladesh, hoping to pull her family out of poverty.

Her fingers ached from stitching pants and shirts destined for sale in the United States and Europe, but the \$30 the young woman made each month meant that for the first time, her family had regular meals, even luxuries like chicken and milk.

A decade later, she was providing a better life for her own child than she had ever imagined.

Then the world locked down, and Shahida Khatun, like millions of low-wage workers around the world, found herself back in the poverty she thought she had left behind.

In a matter of mere months, the coronavirus has wiped out global gains that took two decades to achieve, leaving an estimated two billion people at risk of abject poverty. However indiscriminate the virus may be in its spread, it has repeatedly proved itself anything but that when it comes to its effect on the world’s most vulnerable communities.

“The garment factory helped me and my family to get out of poverty,” said Ms. Khatun, 22, who was laid off in March. “But the coronavirus has pushed me back in.”

For the first time since 1998, the World Bank says, global poverty rates are forecast to rise. By the end of the year, 8 percent of the world’s population, half a billion people, may be pushed into destitution, largely because of the pandemic, the United Nations estimates.

Ms. Khatun was among thousands of women across South Asia who took factory jobs and, as they entered the work force, helped the world made inroads against poverty.

Now those gains are at grave risk.

“These stories, of women entering the workplace and bringing their families out of poverty, of programs lifting the trajectories of families, those stories will be easy to destroy,” said Abhijit Banerjee, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a winner of the 2019 Nobel Prize for economics.

While everyone will suffer, the

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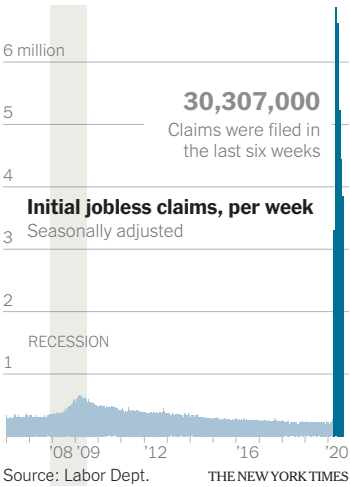
Added Worries Over a Stunning Decline in Spending

This article is by **Nelson D. Schwartz, Tiffany Hsu and Patricia Cohen.**

Despite trillions in stimulus spending and a rush to reopen shuttered businesses in some states, the American economy continues to stagger under the weight of the coronavirus pandemic, with a further 3.8 million workers filing for unemployment benefits last week.

The figures announced Thursday by the Labor Department bring the number of workers joining the official jobless ranks in the last six weeks to more than 30 million, and underscore just how dire economic conditions remain.

The depth of the chill was evident when the Commerce Department reported that consumer spending in March fell by 7.5 per-



cent from February’s level, a stunning decline that helps explain why the overall economy is so weak. Consumer activity ordinarily accounts for more than two-thirds of the country’s output.

The flood of unemployment claims continues to overwhelm many state agencies, leaving millions with dwindling resources to pay the rent or put food on the table.

If anything, according to many economists, the job losses may be far worse than government tallies indicate.

A study by the Economic Policy Institute found that roughly 50 percent more people than counted as filing claims in a recent four-week period may have qualified for benefits — with the difference representing those who were stymied in applying or didn’t even

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In a First, New York Will Shutter The Subway for a Nightly Scrub

By **CHRISTINA GOLDBAUM**

New York has long prided itself on its 24-hour subway, one of the world’s few round-the-clock transit systems and a symbol of the city’s relentless energy. But since the coronavirus outbreak began, the subway has reflected the city’s deterioration: Ridership has plummeted by more than 90 percent, thousands of sick workers have hobbled the ability to run service, and the number of homeless people on trains has grown.

On Thursday, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo and transit officials took the extraordinary step of trying to restore the system by shutting it down from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m., hoping to provide more time for the disinfecting of trains, equipment and stations during the pandemic.

The decision to halt regularly scheduled overnight service for

the first time in the Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s history demonstrates the stark steps state officials are taking to preserve a system that is critical to reviving New York’s economy when businesses begin to reopen.

“We’ve never been here before,” said Mr. Cuomo, who this week instructed the M.T.A. to devise a plan to clean more frequently. “This is going to be one of the most aggressive, creative, challenging undertakings that the M.T.A. has done.”

Shutting down the system overnight is crucial for the transit agency to test and explore disinfecting techniques, including ultraviolet lights and antimicrobial agents, M.T.A. officials said. Still, groups representing riders raised

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Sacked Again, but by a Virus

The pandemic, the latest of many hardships, has left scenes of eerie beauty and abandonment in Rome. PAGE A18

Victory for Sudan’s Women

The new government outlawed female genital mutilation, an often dangerous but widespread practice. PAGE A20

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What About the Accuser?

The woman who says Joseph R. Biden Jr. assaulted her has been silenced by TV news shows, Ben Smith writes. PAGE A22

Trump Backs Flynn Again

The president revived his attacks on the F.B.I. after lawyers for Michael T. Flynn cited newly unsealed documents as evidence of misconduct. PAGE A24

TRACKING AN OUTBREAK A4-17

Pressure to Keep Plants Going

Multinational corporations with factories in Mexico have remained open, even after some workers fell ill. PAGE A7

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How A.I. Assisted Virus Fight

Specialists at the London start-up BenevolentAI helped identify the arthritis drug baricitinib, which is now part of a clinical trial. PAGE B1

Emissions Set for a Record Fall

A nearly 8 percent drop in emissions, driven by the Covid-19 crisis, is likely this year, a new report said. PAGE B7

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Ironman’s World Is Not Enough

The endurance brand believed its global racing schedule minimized its risk. Then the pandemic struck. PAGE B10



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Five Artists to Follow

A look at some Instagram accounts on our critic’s feed. Above, Farah Al Qasimi’s “Dyed Pastel Birds.” PAGE C13

Trapped at Home? Your Move

Alexis Soloski and her family are finding board games to be a particularly soothing way to pass the time now. PAGE C1

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Doyenne of Dictionaries

A woman of many words, most unspoken, Madeline Kripke collected nearly 20,000 lexicons. She was 76. PAGE A28

Pursuer of Nazi-Looted Art

David Toren, 94, recovered a relative’s stolen painting amid a large cache of works discovered in Germany. PAGE A25

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