



DAVID DEE DELGADO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES
Medical workers in Brooklyn moved a body to a refrigerated truck. New York City added 45 such trailers as hospital morgues filled up.

In a Scramble, Businesses Vie For U.S. Loans

By STACY COWLEY and EMILY FLITTER

The frenzy began even before most banks opened. By 9 a.m. on Friday, banks had already processed 700 loans totaling \$2.5 million for small businesses as the spigot opened on a federal emergency relief program. But that was just the beginning. By early afternoon, that number had ballooned to \$1.8 billion. And by evening, it was \$3.2 billion in loans that will go to more than 10,000 small businesses desperate to save themselves.

It was all part of a scramble by small businesses around the country to stay alive by grabbing a piece of a Treasury Department program to pump \$349 billion into the sputtering U.S. economy. Small businesses, which employ nearly half of America's private-sector workers, are hemorrhaging, and the loans are meant to help them retain employees or rehire those they let go because of the coronavirus pandemic.

But business owners found that applying for the money was harder than they had expected. Lenders had received guidance from the Treasury Department only the night before, just hours before they were to start making loans. On top of that, banks imposed their own rules on which businesses could and could not borrow. And many lenders, including JPMorgan Chase, the nation's largest, did not have their websites ready for borrowers until later Friday.

For small-business owners, many of whom have run out of cash to pay salaries and rent, time was everything. Fearful that the money will run out — Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the loans would be on a first-come, first-served basis —

Continued on Page A14

Survivors Fume as China Insists on Quiet Burials

By AMY QIN and CAO LI

Liu Pei'en held the small wooden box that contained his father's remains. Only two months ago, he had helplessly clutched his father's frail hand as the elderly man took his last breath, and the pain was still raw. He wept.

But there was little time, or space, for Mr. Liu to grieve. He said officials in the central Chinese city of Wuhan had insisted on accompanying him to the funeral home and were waiting anxiously nearby. Later, they followed him to the cemetery where they watched him bury his father, he said. Mr. Liu saw one of his minders taking photos of the funeral, which was over in 20 minutes.

"My father devoted his whole life to serving the country and the party," Mr. Liu, 44, who works in

Citizens Now Question Death Toll Numbers From Government

finance, said by phone. "Only to be surveilled after his death."

For months, the residents of Wuhan had been told they could not pick up the ashes of their loved ones who had died during the height of China's coronavirus outbreak. Now that the authorities say the epidemic is under control, officials are pushing the relatives to bury the dead quickly and quietly, and they are suppressing on-line discussion of fatalities as doubts emerge about the true size of the toll.

China's official death toll from the coronavirus stood at 3,322 on

Friday, but medical workers and others have suggested the count should be higher. The C.I.A. has warned the White House for weeks that China vastly understated its epidemic, current and former American intelligence officials say.

As China tries to control the narrative, the police in Wuhan, where the pandemic began, have been dispatched to break up groups on WeChat, a popular messenger app.

Continued on Page A6

TRACKING AN OUTBREAK

FIRE CAPTAIN Navy sailors hailed their boss for putting safety ahead of his career. PAGE A15

WHITE HOUSE Tension persists between the president and his medical advisers. PAGE A16



LAETITIA VANCON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES
A Show of German Generosity
Young people have flooded in to replace the older, vulnerable volunteers at a Munich food bank.

Farmworkers Once Unwelcome Are Now Deemed 'Essential'

By MIRIAM JORDAN

LOS ANGELES — Like legions of immigrant farmworkers, Nancy Silva for years has done the grueling work of picking fresh fruit that Americans savor, all the while afraid that one day she could lose her livelihood because she is in the country illegally.

But the widening coronavirus pandemic has brought an unusual

kind of recognition: Her job as a field worker has been deemed by the federal government as "essential" to the country.

Ms. Silva, who has spent much of her life in the United States evading law enforcement, now carries a letter from her employer in her wallet, declaring that the Department of Homeland Security considers her "critical to the food supply chain."

"It's like suddenly they realized

Undocumented but Key to U.S. Food Chain

we are here contributing," said Ms. Silva, a 43-year-old immigrant from Mexico who has been working in the clementine groves south of Bakersfield, Calif.

It is an open secret that the vast majority of people who harvest

America's food are undocumented immigrants, mainly from Mexico, many of them decades-long residents of the United States. Often the parents of American-born children, they have lived for years with the cloud of deportation hanging over their households.

The "essential work" letters that many now carry are not a free pass from immigration authorities, who could still deport Ms. Silva.

Continued on Page A11

AS DEATHS MOUNT, NEW YORK PLEADS FOR OUTSIDE HELP

Undercutting C.D.C., President Says He Won't Wear Mask

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR and SHEILA KAPLAN

WASHINGTON — President Trump said on Friday that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was urging all Americans to wear a mask when they leave their homes, but he immediately undercut the message by repeatedly calling the recommendation voluntary and promising that he would not wear one himself.

"With the masks, it is going to be really a voluntary thing," the president said at the beginning of the daily coronavirus briefing at the White House. "You can do it. You don't have to do it. I am choosing not to do it. But some people may want to do it, and that's OK. It may be good. Probably will — they're making a recommendation. It's only a recommendation, it's voluntary."

"Wearing a face mask as I greet presidents, prime ministers, dictators, kings, queens — I don't know," he added. "Somehow, I don't see it for myself."

Mr. Trump's announcement, followed by his quick dismissal, was a remarkable public display of the intense debate that has played out inside the West Wing over the past several days as a divided administration argued about whether to request such a drastic change in Americans' social behavior.

Dr. Steven Choi, the chief quality officer and associate dean at Yale New Haven Health System and Yale University School of Medicine, said the president's behavior at the briefing contributed to confusion among health care workers and regular Americans.

"For anyone, particularly the president of the United States, to ignore recommendations from the C.D.C. is not only irresponsible but selfish," Dr. Choi said.

The president's remarks came during a particularly contentious briefing where Mr. Trump insulted reporters, jostled with members of his own administration and returned to pugilistic form after several days in which he appeared to grasp the grim implications of a virus that could kill hundreds of thousands of Americans.

Mr. Trump again dismissed the

Continued on Page A16

State Health System Is Approaching a Breaking Point

By ALAN FEUER

New York, the increasingly battered epicenter of the nation's coronavirus outbreak, on Friday reported its highest number of deaths in a single day, prompting state officials to beg the rest of the United States for assistance and to enact an emergency order designed to stave off medical catastrophe.

In the 24 hours through 12 a.m. on Friday, 562 people — or one almost every two-and-a-half minutes — died from the virus in New York State, bringing the total death toll to nearly 3,000, double what it was only three days before. In the same period, 1,427 newly sickened patients poured into the hospitals — another one-



DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES
A medical mask on the subway in a hard-hit New York City.

day high — although the rate of increase in hospitalizations seemed to stabilize, suggesting that the extreme social-distancing measures put in place last month may have started working.

Despite the glimmer of hope, the new statistics were a stark reminder of the gale-force strength of the crisis that is threatening New York, where more than 102,000 people — nearly as many as in Italy and Spain, the hardest-hit European countries — have now tested positive for the virus.

The situation, as it has been for weeks, was particularly dire in New York City, where some hospitals have reported running out of body bags and others have begun to plan for the unthinkable prospect of rationing care.

"It is hard to put fully into words

Continued on Page A17

Life Goes On in Holdout States Despite Pressure for Lockdown

By SARAH MERVOSH and JACK HEALY

A surge in coronavirus deaths in the United States has prompted the vast majority of governors to order their residents to stay home, but a small number of states are resisting increasingly urgent calls to shut down.

The pressure on the holdouts in the Midwest and the South has mounted in recent days as fellow governors, public health experts and even their own citizens urge them to adopt tougher measures that have been put in place across 41 states and Washington, D.C.

Health experts warn that the coronavirus can easily exploit any gaps in a state-by-state patchwork of social distancing in the country, where the death toll climbed past 6,600 on Friday.

"I just don't understand why we're not doing that," Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, the nation's leading expert on infectious diseases, said on CNN. "We really should be."

By Friday, nine states had yet to issue formal statewide stay-at-

home orders. It is the most direct, stringent measure available, going beyond closing down restaurants and schools and instructing all residents to stay at home, except for necessities. In some of those states, cities and counties had stepped in to issue their own orders, leaving a patchwork of restrictions.

The contrast is the starkest in five states — Arkansas, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota — where there are no such orders in place, either in major cities or statewide. Another four had partial restrictions issued locally in certain cities or counties.

In interviews and at news conferences this week, the governors in the holdout states defended their decision, saying that they had already taken strong steps — closing schools, and shutting down or limiting many aspects of public life, including restaurants, bars, gyms, bowling alleys and

Continued on Page A10

NATIONAL A20-21, 24

No Insurance, Plenty of Plans

For Samelys López and others aiming to expand access to health care, running for Congress means giving up coverage. PAGE A20



Trump Ousting Watchdog

The inspector general for the intelligence community, who played a crucial role in the Ukraine complaint that led to the impeachment of the president, will be fired. PAGE A21

INTERNATIONAL A18-19

Challenging Uganda's Ruler

Stella Nyanzi mixes profanity with razor-sharp political insight to skewer the country's autocratic president. The Saturday Profile. PAGE A18

Press Crackdown in Myanmar

The authorities detained a prominent editor after he published an article on the rebel Arakan Army. PAGE A19

OBITUARIES B12-14

Gritty 'Lean on Me' Singer

Bill Withers, a three-time Grammy winner, had a string of much-covered hits in the 1970s. He was 81. PAGE B13

SPORTSSATURDAY B9-11

Chafing at Bills For TV Sports

With seasons on pause because of the coronavirus, cable customers want to know why they're paying the fees for sports channels. PAGE B9



Hard Times for Team U.S.A.

The Olympic Games have been postponed. That means nearly \$200 million in funding, which American athletes depend on for living and training expenses, could be deferred, too. PAGE B9

BUSINESS B1-8

Screens Win Screen-Time War

Before the coronavirus outbreak, we tried all sorts of things to stop ourselves from staring at our devices. Digital detoxes. Abstinence. Now? Bring on the Zoom cocktail hour. PAGE B1

A Decade of Job Growth Ends

After the longest period of employment expansion on record for the United States, which added 22 million to payrolls, March registered a loss. Bigger setbacks are expected. PAGE B1

EDITORIAL, OP-ED A22-23

Bret Stephens

PAGE A23

THIS WEEKEND

