



The Barnett Group

The Corona Crisis:

NEWS YOUR COMPANY CAN USE

30 June 2020

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Pandemic Updates.

Bleak Milestones: 500,000 global deaths are reported; World's case total reaches 10 million

In April, roughly a month after the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a pandemic, deaths topped 100,000. In early May, the figure climbed to 250,000. Now it has doubled in less than two months. (More than a quarter of all known deaths have been in the United States.) *The number of confirmed infections — which took about 40 days to double — may be substantially underestimated, public health officials say.* Last week, CDC indicated that the actual figures in many regions are probably 10 times as high as reported. [Click World Cases Surge](#)

WHO: The worst yet to come

WHO Director Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the virus will infect many more people if governments do not start to implement the right policies. His message remained "Test, Trace, Isolate and Quarantine". Dr Tedros told a virtual briefing on Monday: "We all want this to be over. We all want to get on with our lives. But the hard reality is this is not even close to being over." [Click WHO](#)

Trump's bet on a vaccine could come at a cost: The U.S. has poured \$10 billion into Operation Warp Speed.

This overall assessment of the Trump approach to the search for a vaccine, including his Operation Warp Speed, is reviewed here. The Trump plan has defunded and stalled other research projects; given mixed and peculiar messages on treatments and vaccine time frames; and outside experts say that "federal officials need to level with the public." [Click Trump Approach](#)

Biased Artificial Intelligence (AI) perpetuates racial injustice

As corporations address the racism that has permeated our history, AI now plays a role in creating, exacerbating and hiding these disparities behind the facade of a seemingly neutral, scientific machine. As this article points out, these disparities have become ever more obvious during this pandemic and in reality, AI is a mirror that reflects and magnifies the bias in our society.

[Click AI](#)

Coronavirus antibodies may last only two to three months after infection, study suggests

According to a study published in [Nature Medicine](#), COVID antibodies may last only 2-3 months. Researchers examined 37 asymptomatic people in the Wanzhou District of China and compared their antibody response to that of 37 people with symptoms. The

researchers found people without symptoms had a weaker antibody response than those with symptoms. Within eight weeks, 81% of the asymptomatic people saw a reduction in neutralizing antibodies, compared with 62% of symptomatic patients. Additionally, antibodies fell to undetectable levels in 40% of asymptomatic people, compared with 12.9% of symptomatic people, according to the study's findings. [Click Antibodies](#)

Fauci says Covid-19 vaccine may not get US to herd immunity

Dr. Anthony Fauci says he would "settle" for a Covid-19 vaccine that's 70% to 75% effective, but that this incomplete protection, coupled with the fact that many Americans say they won't get a coronavirus vaccine, makes it "unlikely" that the US will achieve sufficient levels of immunity to quell the outbreak. [Click Fauci](#)

IMF Predicts Deeper Global Downturn Even as Economies Reopen

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects a 4.9 percent contraction this year instead of its previously forecast 3 percent drop. These figures underscore the scale of the task facing policymakers, from what the IMF has described as the "most severe economic contraction since the Great Depression." The IMF now projects that the U.S. economy will shrink 8 percent this year before expanding 4.5 percent next year. [Click IMF](#)

SBA Rolls Out Dedicated Tool for Small Businesses to Connect with Best Lenders and to Assist Small Companies Participating in PPP

The SBA is focused on assisting eligible borrowers in underserved and disadvantaged communities and connecting them with forgivable PPP loans," said SBA Administrator Jovita Carranza. "As communities begin to carefully reopen across the country," this tool is supposed to provide assistance to underserved communities. [Click SBA](#)

Testing, Treatments, Vaccines and Contact Tracing _

How Does Moderna's Covid Vaccine Timing Compare With JNJ And Pfizer?

Moderna has phase 2 trials underway for its vaccine candidate mRNA-1273 and is expected to commence phase 3 trials in July, in collaboration with the U.S. National Institutes of Health. German biotech company BioNTech is working on a Covid-19 vaccine in partnership with Pfizer. For Pfizer, while the development uses messenger RNA technology similar to Moderna, its effort focuses on not just one, but four prototypes. The vaccine is in phase 1/2 clinical trials in the U.S. and Germany and the first set of results from the studies are likely to be available in the coming weeks with phase 3 coming early as July, Johnson & Johnson is expected to start phase 1/2a trials

over the second half of July, ahead of the company's initial timeline of September. J&J could have a leg up over rivals in terms of production capacity and distribution reach and has indicated that it aims to supply over one billion doses globally through the course of 2021 if the vaccine proves safe and effective. [Click Moderna Pfizer JNJ](#)

Covid-19 Drug Remdesivir to Cost \$3,120 for Typical Patient

Under the company's plans, Gilead will charge a higher price for most patients in the U.S., and a lower price for the rest of the developed world where governments directly negotiate drug prices. The lower price will be extended to some U.S. government agencies, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs, but not programs such as Medicare and Medicaid that don't directly purchase medicines, a Gilead spokesman said. [Click Remdesivir](#)

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Pandemic unleashes a spike in overdose deaths

A White House drug policy office analysis shows an 11.4 percent year-over-year increase in fatalities for the first four months of 2020, confirming experts' early fears that precautions like quarantines and lockdowns combined with economic uncertainty would exacerbate the addiction crisis. The coronavirus threat put on hold a billion-dollar research program focused on new forms of addiction treatment, as part of a broader freeze on non-Covid-19 work at the National Institutes of Health. [Click Overdose](#)

Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center: Contact Tracing Resources and Expert Guidance

Public health officials have long used contact tracing to break the chain of transmission of infectious diseases and limit the spread of infections. Experts at Johns Hopkins University are offering free guidance, including a course on contact tracing, and other resources for successfully implementing both traditional and digital contact tracing. [Click Hopkins Contact Tracing](#)

CDC: A Contact Tracer's Guide for COVID-19

This CDC Guide provides the guidelines, rationale, and an actual script for contact tracers. When done successfully, tracing will allow for an exchange of information with the exposed person, offer an opportunity to answer questions and provide referrals for testing, medical evaluation and other necessary support services. For public health purposes, tracing can assess their medical condition and other risk factors, and gather information for continued monitoring and support of the individual, the family, and the community. [Click Contact Tracing](#)

Report on Program with Saud Al Nowais, Commercial Counselor from the UAE in the United States, 19 June 2020 hosted by the U.S.Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Al Nowais, a longtime diplomat for the UAE in Washington, D.C., briefed on the US-UAE Economic Policy Dialogue held on June 18.

The commercial trade and investment relationship between the U.S. and U.A.E. continues to be very strong. Bilateral trade is at \$24.4B last year and the U.A.E. is the largest trading partner for the United States in the MENA region.

The 7th U.S.-U.A.E. Economic Policy Dialogue allowed a dialogue in a period wherein, stated Mr. Al Nowais, that has never been more important to these nations. Opportunities are expanding that can benefit both U.S. businesses and the U.A.E. economy notably in food security and the Dialogue discussed facilitating exports to the United States and continued investment in agrosience, new technologies and techniques in agriculture and the food supply chain.

The U.A.E. is emerging, stated Mr. Al Nowais, from the COVID-19 pandemic as a leader due to its healthcare response. The government's quick action with the COVID-19 crisis placed it among the top 10 countries globally in terms of an effective response. Investments in the healthcare sector positioned the U.A.E. to respond efficiently and will allow for future developments and opportunities in other segments of the sector. One example that Mr. Al Nowais provided is its work in genomics, especially in gene-editing and DNA.

During the dialogue, discussions included space cooperation and aviation policy issues. The U.A.E. is launching a space exploration probe mission in July 2020 called the Hope Mars Mission.

Importantly, Mr. Al Nowais said that the U.A.E. government is committed to addressing concerns cited in the USTR Special 301 Report on Intellectual Property Protection and aims to be removed from the list over the coming year.

In the coming years, the U.A.E. is moving forward on several large-scale projects and events. Later this year, Abu Dhabi will inaugurate its first nuclear facility, the Barakah Nuclear Power plant, which will allow all countries to use the U.A.E. as an example of peaceful use of nuclear power. Mr. Al Nowais mentioned that as Expo 2020 Dubai was postponed, the government is continuing to promote the event for 2021.

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Return to Work and Play

Considerations for Wearing Cloth Face Coverings

CDC recommends all people 2 years of age and older wear a cloth face covering in public settings, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. COVID-19 can be spread by people who do not have symptoms and do not know that they are infected. That's why it's important for everyone to wear cloth face coverings in public settings and practice social distancing (staying at least 6 feet away from other people). People who should NOT wear cloth face masks are 1) children age 2 and under; 2) anyone who has trouble breathing; and 3) persons who are unable to remove the mask without assistance. [Click Masks](#)

Updated EEOC Guidance: COVID-19 Antibody Testing Cannot Be Required to Return to Work

In an interesting statement, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”) updated its Technical Assistance Questions and Answers on COVID-19 issues to state that *employers cannot require antibody testing of its employees before they return to work*. The EEOC’s guidance came in response to the CDC’s earlier statement regarding antibody testing. “An antibody test constitutes a medical examination under the ADA. In light of CDC’s [Interim Guidelines](#) that antibody test results ‘should not be used to make decisions about returning persons to the workplace,’ an antibody test at this time does not meet the ADA’s ‘job related and consistent with business necessity’ standard for medical examinations or inquiries for current employees. [Click EEOC](#)

Covid-19 sickens seniors differently. Here’s why.

With normal aging, we see progressive deleterious changes in our immune systems. One component, inflammation, is exaggerated with advancing age which can worsen infections when we get them. Other components of our immune systems weaken with age because the cells that fight off invading organisms directly, or through release of antibodies, become less effective in old age. Another reason that aging complicates matters is that many diseases, and pneumonia in particular, have very different symptoms in the elderly than they do in the middle-aged. Many older covid-19 patients did not present the “classic” symptoms so common in younger patients — fever, cough and shortness of breath. [Click Elderly](#)

‘They Want to Kill Me’: Many Covid Patients Have Terrifying Delirium

To a startling degree, many coronavirus patients are reporting similar experiences. Called “hospital delirium”, the phenomenon has previously been seen mostly in a subset of older patients, some of whom already had dementia, and in recent years, hospitals adopted measures to reduce it. Now, the condition is bedeviling coronavirus patients of all ages with no previous cognitive impairment. Reports from hospitals and researchers suggest that about two-thirds to three-quarters of coronavirus patients in I.C.U.’s have experienced it in various ways. [Click COVID Delirium](#)

CDC: Considerations for Travel

The CDC recommends that if there is any possibility of staying at home, rather than travel, it urges all to stay home. If travel is a necessity, here is the research that is essential before you travel, how to protect yourself during each stage -- air, train or care travel, and how to prepare before you go. [Click CDC on Travel](#). The CDC also offers a useful site that includes precautions to take when traveling overnight, eating in restaurants, using gyms and fitness centers, and more. [Click Personal and Social Activities](#)

Report on Program with columnist Thomas Friedman, New York Times, 29 June 2020 hosted by AmCham Egypt and AmCham Dubai

Let's look at the First Frame Analysis of where we are today.

To really think through COVID, need to look through the *natural world*. On NPR, during Easter, the team did a round-up of the sermons of various pastors around the world. One sermon ended with the song: "S/he has the whole world in her hands." In fact, Mother Nature does have the whole world in her hands. We are all subject to her control --- viruses, germs, hurricanes. And she only rewards the most adaptive.

She first asks: Are you humble, do you respect my virus? Then, are you coordinated in response? Finally, have you built your adaptation response on chemistry, biology and physics? (Do not mess with Mother Nature!) I am merciless, she says, and I'm not keeping score.

What is the mindset we need? What is a sustainable strategy for saving lives and livelihoods.

Three strategies evolved:

The China model (use massive surveillance to test/ track/ trace cases, have done a good job, until herd immunity);

Swedish model, let the many hurt a little, while some will suffer a lot. (elderly) The larger society will develop herd immunity naturally;

Finally, I'm tired of lock-down, I'm going out. Pretend being China, act like we're Sweden, prepared for nothing. Precaution is useless.

All hoping vaccine will emerge by the fall, hoping distributed by 2021.

Second Frame Analysis

Why do we keep having pandemics?

Globalization is deeper and cheaper than ever before, speed of connection is awesome; 3,200 direct flights from China between January to March; 50 direct flights from Wuhan to US; and

We have also been taking buffers out of everything -- out of markets/ climate controls/ food production/ healthcare. Unfortunately, human beings went to EXCESS. Basically, we generally get a warning, we ignore it, and then catastrophes strike.

We must develop SUSTAINABLE values;



PRECLINICAL TESTING: Scientists give the vaccine to **animals** such as mice or monkeys to see if it produces an immune response.

PHASE I SAFETY TRIALS: Scientists give the vaccine to a **small number of people** to test safety and dosage as well as to confirm that it stimulates the immune system.

PHASE II EXPANDED TRIALS: Scientists give the vaccine to **hundreds of people** split into groups, such as children and the elderly, to see if the vaccine acts differently in them. These trials further test the vaccine's safety and ability to stimulate the immune system.

PHASE III EFFICACY TRIALS: Scientists give the vaccine to **thousands of people** and wait to see how many become infected, compared with volunteers who received a placebo. These trials can determine if the vaccine protects against the coronavirus.

APPROVAL: Regulators in each country review the trial results and decide whether to approve the vaccine or not. During a pandemic, a vaccine may receive emergency use authorization before getting formal approval.

WARP SPEED: The U.S. government's [Operation Warp Speed](#) program is expected to name five or more vaccine projects to receive billions of dollars in federal funding before there's proof that the vaccines work.

COMBINED PHASES: Another way to [accelerate vaccine development](#) is to combine phases. Some coronavirus vaccines are now in Phase I/II trials, for example, in which they are tested for the first time on hundreds of people.

Managing the Illness Around the World

Worst virus fears are realized in poor or war-torn countries

As COVID has systematically over-whelmed the most developed countries and their medical facilities, as predicted, the virus is creating havoc on the poorest. In southern Yemen, health workers are leaving their posts en masse because of a lack of protective equipment, in Sudan's war-ravaged Darfur region, a mysterious illness resembling COVID-19 is spreading through camps for displaced person. Cases are soaring in India and Pakistan, together home to more than 1.5 billion people and where authorities say nationwide lockdowns are no longer an option because of high poverty. [Click COVID in Poorest Countries](#)

U.S. withdrawal from WHO threatens to leave it 'flying blind' on flu vaccines

Without access to the intelligence coming from other institutions, the U.S. would be "flying blind," said Nancy Cox, who retired from the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control in 2014 after leading the agency's influenza division for 22 years. New flu variants don't typically emerge in the Americas; they often are first spotted in Asia. The risk to the U.S. wouldn't simply relate to seasonal flu vaccine. Participants at the

meetings share important intelligence on animal flu viruses — avian and swine influenza — that could pose pandemic threats. [Click US Withdrawal from WHO](#)

[The world's climate catastrophe worsens amid the pandemic](#)

The “vision of nature ‘healing’ itself was always an illusion.” Carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere are the highest they’ve been in human history, and possibly higher than in the past 3 million years. The giant plumes of Saharan dust that wafted over the Atlantic and choked a broad swath of southern U.S. states; the swarms of locusts reached New Delhi marking the latest advance of a vast plague, and the specter of man-made climate change looms ominously over a planet in the grips of a viral pandemic. [Click Climate Change and the Pandemic](#)

Time to Relax

[At Home: The best ideas for living right now](#)

Well into our fourth month at home, [The New York Times](#) provides a huge list of things to do for coping with the at home-ness of COVID. “... we’ll tell you all about delicious things to make and eat ([strawberry drop biscuits](#), please!), and we’ll point you toward performances worth your time (here’s Aretha Franklin, “[Never Gonna Break My Faith](#),” featuring The Boys Choir of Harlem) and much much more. [Click Living Now](#)

[Best movies for binge watching](#)

Here are our top picks to stream this weekend, including a virtual festival, two new guilty pleasures on Netflix and more... [Click Binge Watching](#)

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Discover two million years of human history. [Click British Museum](#)

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Virtual tour of “We are Not Alone” and other galleries. [Click Louvre Abu Dhabi](#)



Faces of COVID

