VOA NEWS

May 26, 2020

This is VOA news. Via remote, I'm Marissa Melton.

U.S. President Donald Trump is suspending travel from Brazil to the United States. Brazil now has the world's second highest number of coronavirus cases.

The White House says the president is taking this " action ... to help ensure foreign nationals who have been in Brazil do not become a source of additional infections in our country." The restriction will take effect late on Thursday.

The decision applies to foreigners who want to come to the United States and have been in Brazil during the last 14 days. That's the period during which health experts say someone can have COVID-19 and infect others without showing any symptoms. The president has similarly banned travel from China, the United Kingdom and from Europe.

Permanent U.S. residents and their immediate families are exempt along with what Trump calls the "free flow of commerce."

As of today, Brazil had more than 363,000 cases of COVID-19. It's the second-highest number after the United States. Brazil has registered more than 22,000 deaths from the illness.

Afghan authorities released 100 Taliban prisoners Monday as part of the government's response to a surprise, three-day cease-fire from the insurgents that's called to mark the Eid al-Fitr festival.

The pause in fighting is only the second of its kind in nearly 19 years of war in Afghanistan. It appeared to be holding on day two after the government welcomed the truce by announcing plans to release up to 2,000 Taliban inmates.

President Ashraf Ghani said his administration was also ready to hold peace talks with the Taliban. [they are seen as key] Those peace talks are seen as key to ending the war in the impoverished [count...] country.

Beijing has warned the United States it will take every necessary measure to protect its interests after a top White House adviser warned of possible sanctions.

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Ruling party candidate Evariste Ndayishimiye has won Burundi's presidential election by a landslide, preliminary results show, while the main opposition party cries fraud.

The independent election committee announced partial results on Monday, giving Ndayishimiye 69 percent of the votes and his chief competitor Agathon Rwasa [of the comp...] of the opposition CNL party 24 percent.

CNL party disputes the results. There has been no response so far from the government or the current president-elect.

Final results are expected on Tuesday. All parties have 10 days to challenge the outcome before the constitutional court.

Egypt's top medical union on Monday warned of a "complete collapse" of the country's health care system, accusing the Health Ministry of negligence in failing to [prev...] protect health care workers from coronavirus.

The Egyptian Medical Syndicate said in a statement the collapse could lead to a catastrophe affecting the entire country if the situation is not [reci...] rectified.

The statement came after a 32-year-old doctor died on Saturday after being unable to secure a bed in an isolation hospital.

COVID-19 has killed 19 doctors in Egypt and infected more than 350. That's according to the EMS. That's a body representing thousands of Egyptian doctors.

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López [Obrador] Obrador said Sunday the new coronavirus could cost as many as a million jobs in the country as many industries considered not essential remain shut.

The Mexican economy was already in recession before the pandemic struck and different investment banks have forecast contractions as large as 9 percent for this year with only a gradual recovery next year.

López Obrador's government repeatedly said it had the outbreak under control but it has since posted record numbers for new cases and deaths.

The World Health Organization said Monday it's temporarily suspended clinical trials of hydroxycholoroquine as a potential treatment for COVID-19.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a virtual [puch...] press conference the decision came after the publication last week of a study in the *Lancet* medical journal. The study indicated that using the drug on COVID-19 patients could actually increase their likelihood of dying.

He added the WHO-backed trials have been suspended while the safety is reviewed.

And Russian President Vladimir Putin made a rare lockdown appearance in the Kremlin on Monday after officials said improvements in the coronavirus situation may allow Russia to reopen some tourist resorts soon and relax restrictions in many regions.

Via remote, I'm Marissa Melton. You're listening to VOA news.