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## MORNING BRIEF

# Anthony Fauci and U.S. Surgeon General Prepare Americans For Their “Hardest Moment”

U.S. officials are preparing Americans for another tough week of coronavirus deaths, as official tallies creep up to 10,000.

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BY COLM QUINN | APRIL 6, 2020, 5:27 AM

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Here is today’s *Foreign Policy* brief: **U.S. officials brace** for “hardest moment” in week ahead, **U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson is hospitalized** with COVID-19, and the EU Commission president calls for **new Marshall Plan**.

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## Fauci: “Things Are Going To Get Bad”

The U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams invoked the attacks of September 11 and Pearl Harbor in preparing Americans for the week ahead as the United States struggles with its coronavirus epidemic. “It’s going to be the hardest moment for many Americans in their entire lives, and we really need to understand that if we want to flatten that curve and get through to the other side, everyone needs to do their part,” Adams **told** NBC on Sunday.

Anthony Fauci, the most senior infectious disease specialist on the White House coronavirus task force echoed Adams’s comments, “Things are going to get bad and we need to be prepared for that. It’s going to be shocking to some and it certainly is really disturbing to see that ... just buckle down,” he **said**.

By contrast, at yesterday’s White House press briefing U.S. President Donald Trump was upbeat, “We see the light at the end of the tunnel,” he said. Trump said the United States has ordered 29 million hydroxychloroquine pills, a drug usually used in fighting malaria that is so far unproven in combatting COVID-19. “We don’t have time to say, ‘Gee, let’s take a couple of years and test it out and go with the test tubes and the laboratories’ ... We have people dying today,” Trump **said**.

**Are U.S. death toll figures accurate?** The *Washington Post* **reported** on why the U.S. death toll from COVID-19—**now** at 9,619—is likely higher than recorded: A lack of widespread testing early on in the epidemic means that deaths in February and early March were not recorded as coronavirus-related. Many nursing homes facing outbreaks may have saved testing for living patients and neglected to test those who had already died due to a nationwide testing-kit shortage. Because the

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention only counts cases where coronavirus has been confirmed by a test, the total number of deaths could be much higher, "We know that it is an underestimation," a CDC spokesperson said.

**Where is the curve flattening?** FP's Audrey Wilson has pulled together **lessons** from nations that have had some success in fighting the spread of the coronavirus such as Taiwan, Canada, South Korea, Georgia, and Iceland. Mass testing programs seem to help, as well as having a national psyche bolstered by previous brushes with disaster.

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## What We're Following Today

**Boris Johnson admitted to hospital.** U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson has been hospitalized after his period in self-isolation following a diagnosis for COVID-19 failed to bring him a clean bill of health. With ongoing symptoms, including a fever more than a week after testing positive, there are fears that his condition could deteriorate—especially if he develops pneumonia. The prime minister is likely to face a battery of **diagnostic tests**, including CT scans of his lungs.

"This is a precautionary step, as the prime minister continues to have persistent symptoms of coronavirus 10 days after testing positive for the virus," a Downing Street spokesperson **said**. Dominic Raab, the U.K. foreign secretary, is next in line to lead the British government if Johnson is incapacitated.

*Foreign Policy* is keeping track of world leaders who have tested positive for the coronavirus with a **running list**.

**New Marshall Plan.** Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Commission, has **called** for a new Marshall Plan to deal with the economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic and implored member nations to invest billions in the EU budget. This follows a similar call to action by Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez for massive investment to counteract the crisis. "The United States responded to the recession of 2008 with a stimulus package, while Europe responded with austerity. We all know the outcome. Today ... the US has implemented the greatest mobilization of public resources in its history. Is Europe willing to be left behind?" he **wrote** in the *Guardian*.

**Yemen pipeline attack.** An oil pipeline pumping station was **attacked** in Yemen over the weekend, although the perpetrator is still unclear. The Saudi-backed Yemeni government blamed the Houthis for the attack, whereas the Houthi-controlled government in Yemen's capital Sanaa blamed Saudi coalition forces. The United Nations has renewed a push for a cease-fire and new talks between the two sides as the coronavirus threatens to exacerbate the country's humanitarian crisis.

**Greece quarantines second refugee camp.** Greece has quarantined its **second** mainland refugee camp in the space of a week after an Afghan resident tested positive for the coronavirus in the

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Malakasa camp, near Athens. Malakasa now joins the Ritsona camp in central Greece, which was quarantined after 20 coronavirus cases were discovered.

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## Keep an Eye On

**Iran hints at gradual reopening.** Iranian President Hassan Rouhani **announced** that "low-risk" economic activity would resume in the country starting on April 11. Although he did not elaborate on what activities qualify as low-risk, schools and universities will remain closed and large events will still be banned until April 18. Iran has recorded the highest number of coronavirus cases in the Middle East; 58,226 people have contracted COVID-19 and 3,603 have died. On March 26, Maysam Behravesh **wrote** in FP about how Iran's leadership botched its response to its coronavirus epidemic.

**Starmer wins U.K. Labour leadership.** Keir Starmer saw off rivals Rebecca Long-Bailey and Lisa Nandy in the first round of voting to **win** the leadership of the U.K. Labour Party. Starmer, who **said** he would work with Prime Minister Boris Johnson "in the national interest," is seen as a more centrist choice than his predecessor, Jeremy Corbyn. Starmer had agreed to meet with Johnson this week before Johnson was hospitalized. Starmer has named Nandy as shadow foreign secretary.

**Chernobyl fire.** A forest fire in the restricted zone surrounding the Chernobyl nuclear disaster site has been **contained**, according to Ukrainian authorities, after an extinguishing operation involving four water airdrops eventually quelled the blaze. Although fires are common around the site, Yegor Firsov, head of Ukraine's state ecological inspection service, said radiation levels were "**above normal**" in the fire's center.

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## The World This Week

**The Democratic primary continues.** Despite other elections being postponed around the world, the Democratic Party will continue its voting as former Vice President Joe Biden seeks to reach the unassailable number of delegates needed to fend off Sen. Bernie Sanders. **Wisconsin's primary** is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 7**, although local mayors have called for a **shutdown** of in-person voting. Meanwhile, the final day to vote in the **Alaska primary is April 10**. Alaska has **cancelled** in-person voting and will cast all votes by mail.

The **OPEC nations and Russia** will meet on **Thursday, April 9**, to discuss a possible end to the oil price war between Saudi Arabia and Russia. The meeting has been called by Saudi Arabia, and it remains unclear whether other oil producers including the United States, the United Kingdom, Mexico, and Canada will take part.

On **Thursday, April 9**, the U.S. Department of Labor will announce the number of **weekly jobless claims**. The last two weekly reports have been jaw-dropping; last week's record 6.6 million unemployment claims broke the record established by the previous week's 3.3 million claims.

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## Odds and Ends

Scotland's Chief Medical Officer Catherine Calderwood has resigned after it emerged that she was not following her own advice on non-essential travel during Scotland's coronavirus lockdown. Calderwood was photographed visiting her holiday home in Earlsferry, about an hour from Edinburgh, over the past two weekends and had been issued a **warning** by local police. "Whatever her reasons for doing so, she was wrong, and she knows that," Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon **said**.

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That's it for today.

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