

First court appearance set for Maxwell in Epstein case

New York

British socialite Ghislaine Maxwell, who faces sex trafficking charges related to disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein, will appear in court remotely for an arraignment and bail hearing on July 14, the judge handling the case wrote Tuesday.

Maxwell -- who was arrested on July 2 after months of living in seclusion, and moved to a federal jail in New York -- faces six counts related to crimes allegedly committed by Epstein, her former boyfriend and a convicted sex offender who killed himself in prison while awaiting trial last summer.

They include perjury and conspiracy to entice minors as young as 14 years old to travel in order to engage in illegal sex acts. Maxwell is also accused of



Ghislaine Maxwell, pictured in 2003, could face life in prison if found guilty on charges linked to Jeffrey Epstein's sex crimes

taking part in some of the sexual abuse.

"An arraignment, initial conference, and bail hearing in this

matter is hereby scheduled to occur as a remote video/teleconference," due to the COVID-19 pandemic, on July 14 at 1 pm, wrote Federal Judge Alison Nathan in an order registered with the court on Tuesday.

At the hearing, prosecutors will argue for Maxwell to remain behind bars without bail.

Maxwell, 58, is the daughter of late newspaper baron Robert Maxwell.

Prosecutors say she is an "extreme" flight risk, pointing out that she has passports from the United States, Britain and France.

The attorneys also say they have identified 15 bank accounts associated with her in the last four years. The total balance of these accounts has ranged from hundreds of thousands of dollars to more than \$20 million.

Pompeo says China took incredibly aggressive action in recent clash with India

Reuters | Washington

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo yesterday accused China of taking "incredibly aggressive action" in a recent confrontation with India over a disputed section of the nuclear-armed neighbours' border.

"The Chinese took incredibly aggressive action," he told a State Department news conference, referring to the clash last month in the Galwan Valley. "The Indians have done



U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo

their best to respond to that."

Russia will impose counter-sanctions on UK: Kremlin



Britain's Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab signing a letter to fellow MPs, in the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in central London

Moscow

Moscow will apply counter-sanctions against Britain, the Kremlin said Tuesday, after London blacklisted Russian officials for their alleged involvement in the death of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky.

"We can only regret such unfriendly measures," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

"Obviously the principle of reciprocity will be applied," he added, without elaborating.

The 25 Russians included on the sanctions list drawn up by Britain's Foreign Office were included for their alleged involvement in the death of Magnitsky.

Magnitsky, a tax consultant for British financier William Browder, died in prison of untreated illness in 2009 after accusing Russian officials of tax fraud of \$230 million.

Russian officials to be targeted by the sanctions include Alexander Bastrykin, the head of the powerful Investigative

Committee that reports directly to President Vladimir Putin.

The Russian Embassy in London on Monday denounced the sanctions, saying the country's legal system was "independent" of the executive authorities and "guided by law alone".

A spokesman for British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Tuesday that the sanctions were targeting individuals involved in "some of the most notorious human rights violations of recent years".

Britain also sanctioned a number of individuals from Saudi Arabia and North Korea.

London has accused Russia of "destabilising" activities including the 2018 chemical attack that almost killed former spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter.

Russia has rejected accusations that officers from its GRU military intelligence agency used a powerful nerve agent to poison Skripal in retribution for his work with British and other Western spy services.

US tops 3 million virus cases

AFP | Washington

The United States yesterday passed another grim coronavirus milestone with three million confirmed cases, as President Donald Trump downplayed the risks posed by the pandemic and aggressively pushed for schools to reopen.

The coronavirus is surging in several southern hotspots including Texas, Florida, Louisiana and Arizona, while it has almost entirely receded from its former epicenter in New York and the north-east.

Johns Hopkins University put the total at 3,009,611, in its real-time tally of confirmed COVID-19 cases.

"At this point, we have tested more than 39 million Americans," US Vice President Mike Pence told reporters.

"Among those, more than three million Americans have tested positive and more than 1.3 million Americans have recovered."

Trump embarked on a morning tweetstorm ahead of a public



Florida governor says state to send 100 health workers to Miami hospital

meeting of his coronavirus task force, in which he called for students to return to their schools in fall and lashed out at his own top health agency.

"In Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and many other countries, SCHOOLS ARE OPEN WITH NO PROBLEMS," he said.

"The Dems think it would be bad for them politically if U.S. schools open before the November Election, but is important for the children & families. May cut off funding if not open!"

He added that he disagreed with guidance for reopening schools set out by the Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention and would be "meeting with them!!!"

Sending children back to school is vital if parents are to return to manufacturing and other jobs that require their physical presence.

All of the countries mentioned by Trump have far smaller epidemics than the United States, while Sweden is viewed by many public health experts as a cautionary tale after shunning lockdowns and experiencing a high death rate.

America is by far the hardest-hit country in the world,

with more than 130,000 deaths -- even as the fatality rate has fallen from highs seen during the late spring peak.

Younger population

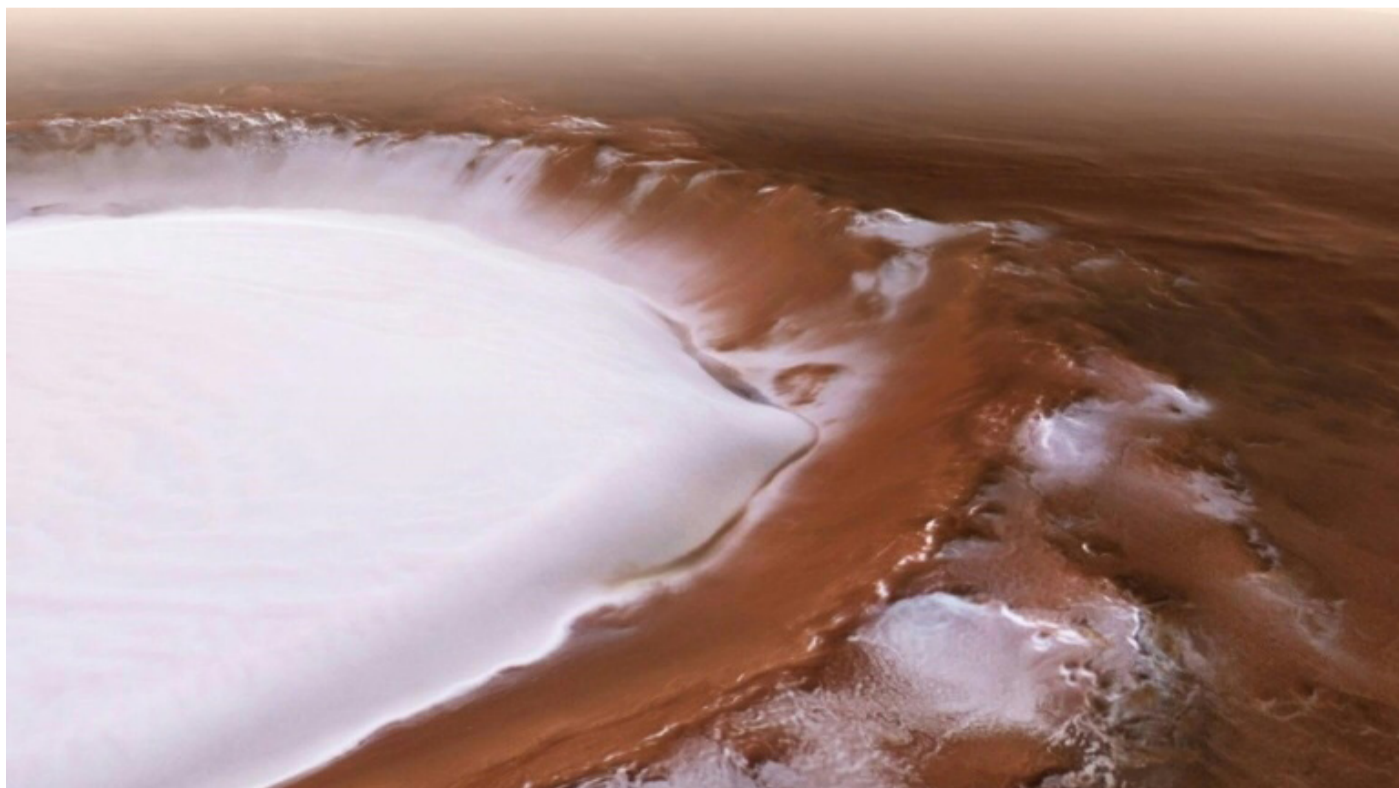
In April and May, as many as 3,000 people were dying each day, while for the past few days it has been around 600.

Experts see several reasons for this fall.

In terms of treatments, doctors have learned that placing patients with severe breathing problems on their stomachs, known as the "prone" position, can ease the burden on their lungs.

In terms of treatments, doctors have learned that placing patients with severe breathing problems on their stomachs, known as the "prone" position, can ease the burden on their lungs. They are also using blood thinners preventatively to avoid life-threatening clots in the lungs, brain, and limbs; and using steroids like dexamethasone to reduce an abnormal autoimmune response that ravages the organs.

Flight over Mars' ice-filled crater 'Korolev'



An animation based on images taken by the ESA's Mars Express showcases the 82-kilometre-wide Korolev Crater on Mars. Located in the northern lowlands of the Red Planet, south of the large Olympia Undae dune field that partly surrounds Mars' north polar cap, this well-preserved impact crater is filled with water ice all year round. The crater's floor lies two kilometres below its rim, enclosing a 1.8 km thick domed deposit that represents a large reservoir of non-polar ice on Mars.

FBI chief says China 'an all-year, all-the-time threat'



FBI Director Christopher Wray says China is pushing its preferences in the US election as part of broad intelligence operations, whose economic impact he calls unprecedented.