

1689

Prince William of Orange (future King William III of Britain), summons Convention Parliament to discuss ruling jointly with his wife Mary



1879

Battle of Rorke's Drift: British garrison of 150 holds off 3,000-4,000 Zulu warriors. Eleven Victoria Crosses and a number of other decorations were awarded to the defenders

1973

Roe vs Wade: US Supreme Court legalizes most abortions

2020

China locks down the city of Wuhan and its 11 million people, in an effort to control COVID-19 with a then official death toll of 17 and over 500 people ill



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TWEETS

01



We don't have a second to waste when it comes to getting this virus under control. That's why today, I'll be signing executive actions to expand testing, administer vaccines, and safely reopen schools and businesses.

@POTUS

02



The comeback from the #COVID19 recession continues. Positive news on the jobs front today with 50,000 more jobs created in Dec. Our Government is all about jobs, jobs & more jobs and supporting Australians with practical things that will drive our economic recovery from #COVID19.

@ScottMorrisonMP

03



President @JoeBiden Rejoining the Paris Agreement is hugely positive news. In the year we host @COP26 in Glasgow, I look forward to working with our US partners to do all we can to safeguard our planet.

@BorisJohnson

04



Anguished by the loss of lives due to an unfortunate fire at the @SerumInstIndia. In this sad hour, my thoughts are with the families of those who lost their lives. I pray that those injured recover at the earliest.

@narendramodi

Biden signs virus measures on first full day in White House

US President Joe Biden unveils sweeping Covid-19 plan in first full day in office

● Joe Biden marks start of presidency with flurry of executive orders

Reuters | Washington

US President Joe Biden launched initiatives yesterday to rein in the raging COVID-19 pandemic, tackling his top priority on his first full day in the White House as he tries to turn the page on Donald Trump's tumultuous leadership.

His administration plans a coordinated federal coronavirus response aimed at restoring trust in the government and focused on boosting vaccines, increasing testing, reopening schools and addressing inequalities thrown up by the disease.

"We can and will beat COVID-19. America deserves a response to the COVID-19 pandemic that is driven by science, data, and public health — not politics," the White House said in a statement outlining the administration's National Strategy on for the COVID-19 Response and Pandemic Preparedness.

Later yesterday, Biden signed a series of executive orders related to the pandemic, including requiring mask-wearing in airports and on certain public transportation, including many trains, airplanes and intercity buses, officials said.

Coronavirus has infected more than 24 million people in the United States and killed more than 405,000, the highest totals in the world. Trump frequently sought to play down the severity of the pandemic and the new Democratic president has put the disease top of a daunting



Joe Biden signs executive orders during his first minutes in the Oval Office

list of challenges, including rebuilding a ravaged economy and addressing racial injustice.

Opening a blitz of policy measures, Biden signed 15 executive actions on Wednesday just hours after he was sworn into office, many aimed at sweeping away Trump's policies.

Those included mandating masks on federal property and halting the withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as issues such as rejoining the Paris climate accord and ending a travel ban on some Muslim-majority countries.

Among the 10 new orders, Biden will establish a COVID-19 testing board to ramp up testing, address supply shortfalls, establish protocols for international

travelers and direct resources to hard-hit minority communities.

Biden has pledged to provide 100 million doses of the coronavirus vaccine during his first 100 days in office. His plan aims to increase vaccinations by opening up eligibility for more people such as teachers and grocery clerks.

Other issues the administration said it would address over the next 10 days include healthcare, the economy, immigration and climate change.

Biden made a plea for unity during his inaugural address on Wednesday, saying overcoming the challenges facing the country would require a return to civility.

"We must end this uncivil war that pits red against blue, rural versus urban, conservative versus liberal. We can do



Biden has pledged to provide 100 million doses of the coronavirus vaccine during his first 100 days in office. His plan aims to increase vaccinations by opening up eligibility for more people such as teachers and grocery clerks

this - if we open our souls instead of hardening our hearts," Biden said on the steps of the Capitol, where a mob of Trump's supporters stormed the building on Jan 6.

Biden proposed a \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 package last week that would enhance jobless benefits and provide direct cash payments to households to alleviate the financial pain from coronavirus.

Yesterday, Biden directed the Federal Emergency Management Administration to reimburse states and tribes fully for the costs associated with National Guard-related efforts to combat the virus, officials said.

The measure restores "full reimbursement" from the FEMA Disaster Relief Fund for costs related to re-opening schools. FEMA funds are typically dispersed after hurricanes, floods or other natural disasters.

Five dead in India vaccine plant fire; coronavirus drug production unaffected

AFP | Pune

Five people died as a fire tore through a building in the world's biggest vaccine manufacturing hub in India yesterday, but the company insisted that the production of drugs to counter the coronavirus pandemic would continue.

Rescue workers discovered five bodies in the under-construction building after the blaze at the Serum Institute of India was brought under control, media reports said, with officials in the western city of Pune confirming the toll.

"Five people have died," city mayor Murlidhar Mohol told reporters.

TV channels showed thick clouds of grey smoke billowing from the sprawling site in Pune, which is responsible for producing millions of doses of the Covishield coronavirus vaccine, developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University.

"It is not going to affect production of the Covid-19 vaccine," a Serum Institute source told AFP, adding that the blaze was at a new facility being built on the 100-acre (40-hectare) campus.



Smoke billows from buildings at India's Serum Institute in Pune

“We are deeply saddened and offer our deepest condolences to the family members of the departed”

ADAR POONAWALLA
CEO OF SERUM INSTITUTE OF INDIA

A fire official earlier told reporters that "three or four people were inside" when the blaze broke out, but all had

been rescued. "No-one is trapped inside," the official said.

"We are deeply saddened and offer our deepest condolences to the family members of the departed," the firm's CEO Adar Poonawalla tweeted, without offering further details.

Both police and the company said the cause of the blaze was not immediately known.

The complex where the fire broke out is a few minutes' drive from the facility where coronavirus vaccines are produced, reports said.

15 dead in Ukraine nursing home fire

AFP | Kiev

At least 15 people were killed Thursday after a blaze tore through a residential home for the elderly in the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv.

The fire broke out in the second storey of the home in the ex-Soviet republic, which is one of the poorest countries in Europe and suffers from an ageing health care system.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky described the incident as "a terrible tragedy" and said 33 people had been in the building when the fire broke out.

Photos distributed by the emergency services showed smoke billowing from charred windows on the second floor of the building, while firefighters in heavy coats worked to assess the damage.

Zelensky confirmed the death toll of 15 reported by emergency services, adding: "We all pray that there will be no more."

It was not clear in the immediate aftermath of the fire how many of the survivors were taken to nearby medical facilities for treatment.

The emergency services reported nine people had been



Firefighters work at the site of fire

admitted to nearby hospitals while Prosecutor General Iryna Venedyktova said 11 people were injured.

She said the authorities were investigating the misuse of electric heaters as a possible cause of the blaze.

Deadly fires are not uncommon in Ukraine, where compliance with safety regulations is poorly enforced and ageing infrastructure is badly maintained.

In December 2019, a fire killed 16 people and injured 30 others at a higher education institution in the Black Sea city of Odessa.

The director was later arrested on charges of negligence.

In August the same year, a fire in a hotel in Odessa killed nine people.

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