

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 22nd Jun 2020

---

### News Highlights

---

#### **Mecca mosques reopen even as Saudi Arabia crosses 150,000 cases**

[Personal prayer rugs and social distancing will be required from the faithful in Mecca](#) mosques as Saudi Arabia plans to reopen more than 1,500 mosques in Mecca, despite coronavirus cases surging past the 150,000 mark. Health officials confirmed 4,301 new cases of the virus on Friday, with a total of 1,184 deaths so far.

#### **Sweden's herd immunity hopes in doubt with new study results**

Sweden followed a radically different strategy to other European nations by keeping most schools, restaurants and businesses open during the pandemic, hoping to achieve herd immunity to overcome the pandemic. [However, a new study casts doubt on that strategy, showing only 6.1% of Swedes developed antibodies, far less than required to achieve any herd immunity target.](#)

#### **Coronavirus numbers surge in Argentina after early success**

[Latin America seems to be the new hotspot of the coronavirus pandemic, with Brazil topping a million cases and Chile and Peru adding another half million.](#) Meanwhile, Argentina is currently standing at only about 42,000 reported infections, with about 1,000 deaths, but new cases have been soaring in recent weeks, especially in the poverty-hit barrios of the cities.

#### **Switzerland to lift most remaining coronavirus restrictions**

[Most coronavirus restrictions imposed by the Swiss government at the start of the coronavirus pandemic are set to be lifted from today.](#) Gatherings of up to 1,000 people will be allowed, if contact tracing measures are in place, and restrictions on the opening hours of bars and restaurants will be lifted. Demonstrations and protests will be allowed, but people will be required to wear masks.

### Lockdown Exit

---

#### **Germany struggles to impose local lockdowns as coronavirus infections spike**

Authorities in Germany's Goettingen and North Rhine Westphalia regions have called on police to enforce quarantine measures following a rise in local coronavirus infections and trouble getting people to adhere to isolation rules. Health authorities needed police reinforcement to maintain lockdown conditions at a tower block in Goettingen after a riot broke out on Saturday where around 700 people had been placed into quarantine. "Around 200 people tried to get out, but 500 people complied with quarantine rules," Uwe Luehrig, head of police in Goettingen, said at a press conference on Sunday. In the ensuing fracas, eight police officers were injured after residents started to attack law enforcement officials with bottles, fireworks and metal bars, Luehrig said. <https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-germany-meat/germany-struggles-to-impose-local-coronavirus-infections-idUKKBN23S0KE>

#### **Spain reopens its borders as state of emergency comes to an end**

Passengers wearing masks and wheeling suitcases arrived at Madrid's main airport and French

people crossed the border to buy bargain alcohol and tobacco on Sunday as Spain opened its borders to most European countries and ended a state of emergency imposed to contain COVID-19.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-spain-borders/spain-reopens-its-borders-as-state-of-emergency-come-to-an-end-idUKKBN23S0BP>

### **Germany's coronavirus reproduction rate jumps above key containment level**

The coronavirus reproduction rate in Germany jumped to 2.88 on Sunday, up from 1.79 a day earlier, the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) for public health said, taking infections above the level needed to contain it over the longer term. A reproduction rate, or 'R', of 2.88 means that out of 100 people who contracted the virus, a further 288 other people will get infected. A rate of less than one is needed to gradually contain the disease. The number, a sharp increase from 1.06 on Friday, is based on RKI's moving 4-day average data, which reflects infection rates one to two weeks ago. RKI said outbreaks have been reported in nursing homes and hospitals, institutions for asylum seekers and refugees, in meat processing plants and logistics companies, among seasonal harvest workers and in connection with religious events and family gatherings.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-germany/germanys-coronavirus-reproduction-rate-jumps-above-key-containment-level-idUKKBN23S0PJ>

### **Coronavirus: R number jumps to 1.79 in Germany after abattoir outbreak**

The coronavirus reproduction rate, known as the R number, has jumped to 1.79 in Germany. The Robert Koch Institute (RKI) for public health confirmed the rate was now far above what is needed to contain the outbreak over the longer term. The R number equates to how many people, on average, will be infected by each person who has COVID-19. If R is above 1, an outbreak can grow exponentially, but if it is below 1, the number of infections shrink and coronavirus can be brought under control.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-r-number-jumps-to-1-79-in-germany-after-abattoir-outbreak-12011468>

### **Saudi ends virus lockdown despite spike in infections**

Saudi Arabia on Sunday ended a nationwide coronavirus curfew and lifted restrictions on businesses, including hair salons and cinemas, after three months of stringent curbs, despite a spike in infections. Prayers were also allowed to resume in mosques in the holy city of Mecca, state media reported, just weeks before the annual hajj pilgrimage is due to start.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-06-saudi-virus-lockdown-spike-infections.html>

### **Dubai allows foreign tourists to enter from July 7**

Those entering would have to present certificates to show they had recently tested negative for the coronavirus. Citizens and residents would be permitted to travel abroad from Tuesday June 23

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1693356/middle-east>

### **How will countries pay off their debt after COVID-19?**

As economies struggle and job losses increase, government debts are headed towards World War II levels. The full impact of the coronavirus pandemic was laid bare when the United Kingdom became the first G20 nation to release its economic data. In April, the first full month of the lockdown, the UK's economy tanked a staggering 20 percent. It is heading towards the worst recession in 300 years. The government is expected to spend \$60bn from March to October as they pay 80 percent of salaries of furloughed workers. The scheme is currently supporting 8.7 million jobs, or a third of all working people

<https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/countingthecost/2020/06/countries-pay-debt-covid-19-200620094839144.html>

### **Coronavirus: 75 staff at Anglesey chicken plant positive**

More workers have tested positive for coronavirus after an outbreak at a chicken factory on

Anglesey. All staff at the 2 Sisters meat processing plant in Llangefni are self-isolating after a number of workers were confirmed to have the virus on Thursday. On Saturday the number had risen to 75, Public Health Wales confirmed. Health officials said the number of cases were expected to rise and samples have been taken from about 350 staff. Testing sites were set up at Llangefni and Holyhead, and at an existing facility in Bangor, following the outbreak. All staff and contractors working at the processing plant, which has 560 workers, have been asked to self-isolate for 14 days, and are being contacted for testing.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-53122894>

### **Poland to lift restrictions on numbers of aircraft passengers**

Poland will allow aircraft to fly with all their seats occupied as of July 1, Deputy Prime Minister Jadwiga Emilewicz has said. However, critics have argued that it is too early to lift all restrictions as it could trigger more infections leading to deaths. Poland has been easing lockdown restrictions related to the coronavirus pandemic and opened its borders with other European Union countries on June 13. Despite that many countries have opened their economies, the epidemiological threat has not subsided yet and virus hotspots have sprouted in various parts across the world. In Poland, over 31,300 people have been infected so far resulting in over 1,300 deaths and more than 15,000 recoveries. Around the world, the virus has infected over 8.6 million, resulting in over 457,000 deaths and more than 4.5 million recoveries.

<https://wbj.pl/poland-to-lift-restrictions-on-numbers-of-aircraft-passengers/post/127417>

### **Macron wants to find quick agreement on EU recovery fund in July: French official**

French President Emmanuel Macron told European Union leaders it was necessary to find a quick agreement on a proposed 750 billion-euro recovery fund in July to maintain the current momentum, a French official said on Friday. Failing to agree on the recovery plan would send the wrong signal, Macron said, according to the same official. In the same call with EU leaders, the French president added that out of 750 billion euros, preserving the 500 billion euros in grants was France's top priority, in line with German Chancellor Angela Merkel. France finds possible and legitimate to link grants with national reforms, though not through Troika-type mechanism, the official added.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-eu-france/macron-wants-to-find-quick-agreement-on-eu-recovery-fund-in-july-french-official-idUSKBN23Q28D>

### **Spain expects swift decision on travel corridor with Britain**

Spain expects a decision very soon in its talks with Britain on whether to establish a travel corridor to facilitate tourism and avoid imposing a quarantine on travellers, a Spanish foreign ministry source told Reuters on Friday. The source did not say if he expected a deal. Amid repeated changes over the past weeks on when and how to open its borders to much-needed foreign tourists, Spain said on Tuesday that it was considering imposing a quarantine on British travellers in response to a similar policy announced by Britain. Britons account for more than a fifth of the roughly 80 million tourists Spain receives every year, and Madrid had said it would talk with London to try to avoid such a quarantine at both ends. "Spain is willing to be open to the United Kingdom, we are in talks with them about their quarantine. We are in a position to open [our borders to UK tourists] without a quarantine," the foreign ministry source said, adding that he expected a decision before Spain opens its borders to tourists from most European countries, including Britain, on Sunday.

<https://www.chronicle.gi/spain-expects-swift-decision-on-travel-corridor-with-britain/>

### **Switzerland lifts most remaining coronavirus restrictions**

From Monday 22, events drawing up to 1,000 people will be allowed (as opposed to 300 at present), provided contact tracing can be guaranteed. Only gatherings of more than 1,000 remain banned until the end of August. Restrictions on when businesses such as bars and restaurants can be open will also be lifted. People will no longer be required to sit down inside. From tomorrow civil and

political gatherings and demonstrations will be allowed but people are required to wear masks. The government is also ending its recommendation that people work from home wherever possible. It will be up to employers to decide and put the necessary safety measures in place.

<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/government-lifts-most-remaining-coronavirus-restrictions/45847950>

### **Singapore lifts most virus lockdown restrictions**

Malls, gyms, massage parlours, parks and other public facilities reopened their doors on Friday in Singapore after nearly three months of coronavirus lockdown. While observing strict social distancing and healthy safety rules, Singaporeans can wine-and-dine at restaurants, work out at the gym and hold social gatherings of up to five people with the removal of most lockdown restrictions. Tuition classes also resumed, except for singing lessons. Minor prohibitions remain including contact sports and places of worship.

<https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/global-event-news/singapore-lifts-most-virus-lockdown-restrictions.html>

## **Exit Strategies**

---

### **German coronavirus tracing app downloaded almost 10 million times: government**

Germany's smartphone app to help trace coronavirus infections has been downloaded 9.6 million times, a government spokeswoman said on Friday. The app, which SAP and Deutsche Telekom helped develop, was launched earlier this week.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-germany-apps/german-coronavirus-tracing-app-downloaded-almost-10-million-times-government-idUKKBN23Q1LP>

### **NYC virus tracing off to a bumpy start: report**

New York City's effort to stop the spread of the coronavirus through contact tracing has been hampered by the reluctance of some people with the virus to provide information to tracers

<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/nyc-virus-tracing-off-bumpy-start-report-71372627>

### **Cross-party group urges chancellor to consider four-day week for UK**

A group of cross-party MPs have urged the government to consider a four-day working week for the UK post Covid-19, arguing the policy could be "a powerful tool to recover from this crisis". The MPs – from Labour, the Scottish National party and the Green party – have written a letter to the chancellor, Rishi Sunak, asking him to set up a commission to explore the option, similar to Scotland's post-Covid-19 Futures Commission which is looking at the possibility of a four-day working week to generate more jobs. The letter, signed by MPs including the former shadow chancellor John McDonnell, SNP MP Mhairi Black and Green MP Caroline Lucas, said a four-day working week would reduce stress and overwork, boost mental health and wellbeing, and increase productivity.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/20/cross-party-group-urges-chancellor-to-consider-four-day-week>

### **Mannequins and decontamination chambers: Future of dining after coronavirus**

Mannequins will be set up at tables, customers will have to undergo temperature checks and there will be plenty of outdoor dining when the coronavirus lockdown is eased to allow bars and restaurants to finally reopen

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/mannequins-decontamination-chambers-future-dining-22223546>

### **California mandates masks for most public activity as coronavirus numbers surge**

Face coverings are "critical to keeping those who are around you safe, keeping businesses open and restarting our economy," Gov. Gavin Newsom said.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/california-mandates-masks-most-public-activity-coronavirus-numbers-surge-n1231487>

### **Ireland speeds up plan to reopen economy**

Ireland on Friday announced another acceleration of the reopening of its economy from COVID-19 restrictions, with the reopening of churches, gyms and team sports brought forward to June 29, acting prime minister Leo Varadkar said. Gatherings of up to 50 people indoors and up to 200 people outdoors will be allowed from June 29 with gatherings of up to 100 people indoors and 500 people outdoors from July 20, he said.

<https://news.trust.org/item/20200619170514-rm60r/>

### **Covid-19 news: UK coronavirus alert level lowered from four to three**

The UK's chief medical officers today said the country's coronavirus alert level has reduced from four to three. This level of the alert system corresponds to the virus being in general circulation, but at a level where it's possible to gradually relax some restrictions. However, restrictions in England have already been progressively relaxed throughout June, even while the alert level remained at four - which corresponds to high or exponentially rising levels of the virus and warrants continued social distancing. For the first time, the government today published the daily rate at which coronavirus infections are growing, alongside the UK's R number, which remains unchanged at around 0.7 to 0.9. For the UK as a whole, the growth rate is believed to be anywhere between -2 per cent and -4 per cent, meaning that infection numbers are declining slightly. At a regional level there is a chance that new cases may be growing in London. However, the government's science advisers believe that growth in infection numbers is unlikely.

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2237475-covid-19-news-uk-coronavirus-alert-level-lowered-from-four-to-three/>

### **UK reviews social distancing rules as COVID-19 cases fall**

The review follows warnings from the hospitality sector that businesses and jobs could be severely affected when they reopen if the current restrictions remain in place.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/06/uk-reviews-social-distancing-rules-covid-19-cases-fall-200619153343829.html>

### **Saudi Arabia to reopen Mecca mosques as cases surpass 150,000**

Saudi Arabia will allow more than 1,500 mosques to reopen in the holy city of Mecca more than three months after they were closed to congregational prayers. The Ministry of Islamic Affairs said Friday that personal prayer rugs and social distancing will be required among worshippers. Gulf News reports that volunteers have posted signs on carpets showing the distances that must be kept during prayers. Saudi Arabia confirmed an additional 4,301 cases of the virus Friday, bringing the total 150,292. Health officials say 1,184 people have died of the virus.

<https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2020/06/saudi-arabia-mosques-mecca-reopen-coronavirus-hajj.html>

### **Nation's capital could move to phase 2 reopening next week**

Mayor Muriel Bowser said Wednesday that she would make a final decision and announcement on Friday. But if the numbers continue "trending in the right direction," Bowser said she expects to launch phase two next week. Playgrounds, libraries, gyms and nail salons would be able to reopen on a limited basis. All nonessential businesses would be allowed to let customers inside up to 50% capacity. Restaurants will be able to seat diners indoors, also at 50% capacity. "We always have the ability to turn up or turn down our reopening," Bowser said. "This virus is not gone. It is still here. It is still spreading."

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-06-nation-capital-phase-reopening-week.html>

## **Partisan Exits**

---

### **Trump urges slowdown in COVID-19 testing, calling it a 'double-edge sword'**

U.S. President Donald Trump on Saturday told thousands of cheering supporters he had asked U.S. officials to slow down testing for the novel coronavirus, calling it a "double-edged sword" that led to more cases being discovered. In his remarks, Trump used terms such as "Kung Flu" virus and

“Chinese virus” to refer to COVID-19. “That name gets further and further away from China, as opposed to calling it the Chinese virus,” he said.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-trump-testing/trump-urges-slowdown-in-covid-19-testing-calling-it-a-double-edge-sword-idUKKBN23S01D>

### **Trump's Tulsa rally: Court rejects bid for face masks, social distancing**

The Oklahoma Supreme Court on Friday rejected a request to require everyone attending President Donald Trump's rally in Tulsa this weekend to wear a face mask and maintain social distancing inside the arena to guard against the spread of the coronavirus. The court ruled that the two local residents who asked that the thousands expected at Saturday night's rally be required to take the precautions couldn't establish that they had a clear legal right to the relief they sought. Oklahoma has had a recent spike in coronavirus cases, but in a concurring opinion, two justices noted that the state's plan to reopen its economy is “permissive, suggestive and discretionary.” “Therefore, for lack of any mandatory language in the (plan), we are compelled to deny the relief requested.”

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/election-2020/ct-trump-tulsa-rally-20200619-m5ql7tb2u5ae5kndycuotpnid-story.html>

### **How Covid-19 spread QAnon in Germany**

The sprawling movement which centers on an alleged “deep state” plot against President Donald Trump, has gained traction among anti-lockdown demonstrators and conspiracy theorists

<https://www.codastory.com/disinformation/qanon-covid19-germany/>

### **Afghan health workers deliberately targeted during pandemic: UN**

A UN report registered a dozen attacks on health workers at the height of Afghanistan's coronavirus outbreak. Targeting the health care system during the pandemic was “particularly reprehensible,” the world body said.

<https://www.dw.com/en/afghan-health-workers-deliberately-targeted-during-pandemic-un/a-53891963>

### **Airlines' legal challenge of UK quarantine policy to be heard early July, lawyers say**

A legal challenge by British Airways (ICAG.L), easyJet (EZJ.L) and Ryanair (RYA.I) against the UK government's decision to introduce a 14-day quarantine for travellers will be heard in early July, barristers involved in the case said on Friday. “The airlines claim that the regulations are irrational and disproportionate. A hearing has been listed for early July,” Blackstone Chambers said in a statement.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-quarantine/airlines-legal-challenge-of-uk-quarantine-policy-to-be-heard-early-july-lawyers-say-idUKKBN23Q2U2>

### **Is the WHO denying there are dangers from asymptomatic patients carrying the coronavirus?**

WHO epidemiologist Ms. Van Kerkhov noted that patients who did not show symptoms of coronavirus were less likely to spread the virus than people with an active response to COVID-19 BUT she did not say the dangers were any less and that asymptomatic people posed no risks Russian languages sites and blogs went ballistic in spreading these lies far and wide. “We have a lot of reports from countries that closely monitor the contacts of infected people. They monitor asymptomatic cases, they monitor contacts and do not detect the transmission of the virus, so this is very rare,” Kerkhov said at a briefing.

<https://sos.pravda.com.ua/articles/2020/06/18/7150777/>

### **Zimbabwe health minister arrested over coronavirus supplies scandal**

Zimbabwean Health and Child Care Minister Obadiah Moyo was arrested Friday for alleged corruption related to the supply of medical materials to combat the coronavirus pandemic, the anti-graft agency said. The Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC) confirmed the arrest of the

minister Friday evening. "I can confirm that Minister Moyo is currently detained at Rhodesville Police Station and will likely appear in court tomorrow," ZACC spokesperson Commissioner John Makamure said. According to Makamure, the minister was arrested over shady procurement deals worth millions of U.S. dollars. Moyo became the second minister to be arrested for alleged corruption in President Emmerson Mnangagwa's government, after the arrest last year of the then tourism minister Prisca Mupfumira.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2020-06-20/Zimbabwe-health-minister-arrested-over-coronavirus-supplies-scandal-Rta8b1wpwl/index.html>

## **Continued Lockdown**

---

### **Morocco opens field hospital after spike in virus cases - The Jakarta Post**

A new field hospital in eastern Morocco will from Sunday receive around 700 COVID-19 patients following a sharp spike in infections in the kingdom, the government said. Morocco reported a record single-day rise in novel coronavirus cases on Friday after an outbreak was detected in fruit packing plants in eastern Kenitra province, prompting Rabat to tighten restrictions in the region. The North African kingdom reported more than 500 cases on Friday, mainly in Kenitra, having recorded on average fewer than 100 new COVID-19 infections daily since confirming its first cases in early March

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/06/22/morocco-opens-field-hospital-after-spike-in-virus-cases.html>

### **Victoria State Extends State of Emergency to Slow Virus Spread**

Australia's Victoria State will extend its state of emergency to July 20 after an up-tick in cases of coronavirus. The four-week extension "allows the Victorian government to continue to enforce physical distancing and isolation requirements," according to a statement on the state premier's website. Victoria recorded 19 new cases from Saturday to Sunday, the fifth day of double-digit increases and the most of any Australian jurisdiction, after hitting a two-month high of 25 on Saturday. On Saturday, state premier Daniel Andrews announced that the number of visitors permitted to homes will be reduced to five from Monday.

<https://www.bloombergquint.com/onweb/victoria-state-extends-state-of-emergency-to-slow-virus-spread>

### **Coronavirus: Why the new 'normal' is merely a thin veneer**

It now looks likely the UK will suffer a longer lockdown than European neighbours, a worse economic hit and a higher death toll. Schools will stay stubbornly closed to millions until September - leaving children bored and lonely, and parents wondering how many hours of TV is acceptable to watch in a day. The economic reality of lockdown is starting to cut through, and on Sunday we'll be speaking to the head of the TUC, Frances O'Grady, to talk about what it means for workers and the chef Ottolenghi to discuss the impact on the food and hospitality industry.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-why-the-new-normal-is-merely-a-thin-veneer-12010763>

### **U.K. lowers coronavirus alert level to 'epidemic' from 'exponential'**

The Joint Biosecurity Centre recommended the Covid-19 alert level should move to level 3 - a Covid-19 epidemic is in general circulation - from level 4. The United Kingdom has a Covid-19 death toll of more than 50,000 based on official data including fatalities where it is mentioned on death certificates, making it one of the worst hit countries in the world.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/20/uk-lowers-coronavirus-alert-level-to-epidemic-from-exponential.html>

### **Coronavirus: five ships detained in UK over welfare fears for crew**

The transport secretary, Grant Shapps, has made an urgent intervention in the growing crisis over the welfare of 1,500 crew on five cruise liners, which British port authorities have detained after a raid on Friday. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency said it was detaining five of six ships it inspected on Friday morning over serious concerns about the welfare of the crew, some of whom have been stranded for three months in Essex.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/20/grant-shapps-vows-to-safeguard-wellbeing-of-crews-on-detained-cruise-ships>

### **Mexico virus cases, deaths continue high, reopening remote**

The planned next stage of reopening of businesses in Mexico appeared to be put off once again Friday, as new confirmed cases and deaths continued at near-record levels. The Health Department reported 5,030 new confirmed coronavirus cases and 647 more deaths, both numbers down just slightly from Thursday. The daily death toll has been hovering around 700 for much of this week, while the daily case load increase has hovered near 5,000. Mexico now has 170,485 confirmed cases and 20,394 deaths, though both numbers are considered undercounts due to extremely limited testing. The country had been hoping to authorize a broad new round of openings for businesses like hotels, restaurants and shopping malls. But authorities in Mexico City, which has been hardest hit by the pandemic, said hospital occupancy and case numbers had not decreased to the point where reopening malls and street markets would be possible. The city has about 70% of its hospital beds occupied.

<https://www.chron.com/news/article/Mexico-virus-cases-deaths-continue-high-15353653.php>

### **Brazil issues new guidelines for meatpackers as coronavirus pandemic ravages plants**

The Brazilian government on Friday published new guidelines for meatpackers after a spike of COVID-19 cases at food plants, including keeping workers at least one meter apart, but labor prosecutors criticized the steps as inadequate. No testing is required under the ministry of agriculture's new rules, which were issued after consultations with the labor prosecutor's office. A prosecutors' representative said the guidelines ignored key recommendations made by the office that specified minimum distancing of 1.5 meters between workers in common areas of the plant, as well as mass testing. The prosecutors' recommendations also addressed the quality of face masks required for use, physical distancing and testing protocols. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended that meatpacking workers be spaced at least six feet (two meters) apart. In addition to distancing employees, Brazil's ministry of agriculture said companies should also monitor those with coronavirus symptoms and immediately remove for 14 days anyone suspected of having been infected. They should also track any workers who came in contact with affected employees, it said.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-brazil-meat/brazil-issues-new-guidelines-for-meatpackers-as-coronavirus-pandemic-ravages-plants-idUKL1N2DW19Z>

### **Coronavirus: Brazil tops one million cases**

Brazil's health ministry said the country surpassed one million confirmed coronavirus cases on Friday, with total deaths fast approaching 50,000 as it struggles with a tense political climate and worsening economic outlook. Brazil confirmed its first case of the virus on February 26. It has spread relentlessly across the continent-sized country, eroding support for right-wing President Jair Bolsonaro and raising fears of economic collapse after years of anaemic growth.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/06/coronavirus-brazil-tops-million-cases-200619214657659.html>

### **Argentina battles coronavirus spike as pandemic grips poverty-hit 'villas'**

The early success Argentina had in slowing the pandemic is in the balance, with new cases soaring in recent weeks and a new daily record set on Thursday. The total has more than doubled to nearly 38,000 since the start of June, though it still stands well below the number of cases in neighboring countries including Brazil and Peru. The official death toll is nearing 1,000, while President Alberto Fernandez was put into partial isolation at his official Olivos residence this week due to the risk from rising cases. The government, unnerved by the recent surge, has moved to contain the spread. Some villas have faced periods of mandatory isolation, while authorities have done mass testing programs, first in Villa 31 and then in other vulnerable areas. "Thanks to these tests we are now

learning about the number of infected we have," said Daniel David López, a resident of the Fuerte Apache villa and president of the Santa Clara football club.

<https://www.msn.com/en-xl/latinamerica/top-stories/argentina-battles-coronavirus-spike-as-pandemic-grips-poverty-hit-villas/ar-BB15I5vu?li=BB12J0nL>

### **Ireland says international quarantine to remain at least until July 9**

Ireland's 14-day quarantine for people arriving from other countries will remain in place at least until July 9 and the government will review the issue at a meeting next week, acting prime minister Leo Varadkar said on Friday. "My ambition ... is to reopen between countries where the virus is as suppressed as it is here, but we want to do that in a coordinated fashion with other European countries, but that hasn't quite happened yet," Varadkar told journalists.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-ireland-quarantine/ireland-says-international-quarantine-to-remain-at-least-until-july-9-idUSKBN23Q33J>

## **Scientific Viewpoint**

---

### **Italy mulls new WHO guidelines on virus patient isolation**

Italy's Health Ministry is asking government advisers to evaluate new World Health Organization recommendations saying that people with COVID-19 can come out of isolation before they test negative for the coronavirus. The WHO last week said patients who spent 10 consecutive days in isolation with symptoms can be released if they are then symptom-free for at least three days. People who don't develop COVID-19 symptoms can stop isolating 10 days after they first test positive, according to WHO's revised guidelines.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/italy-mulls-new-who-guidelines-on-virus-patient-isolation/2020/06/21/6732452a-b3ed-11ea-9a1d-d3db1cbe07ce\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/italy-mulls-new-who-guidelines-on-virus-patient-isolation/2020/06/21/6732452a-b3ed-11ea-9a1d-d3db1cbe07ce_story.html)

### **Public Health Experts Reject President's View of Fading Pandemic**

Contrary to Trump's recent comments, specialists say, recent increases are real, and the virus is like a "forest fire" that will burn as long as there is fuel.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/21/health/coronavirus-pandemic-spread-trump.html>

### **Fergus Walsh: At last some good news about coronavirus**

The study that dexamethasone is part of is called Recovery - Randomised Evaluation of Covid-19 Therapy. Clinical trials usually take months, even years to get under way and involve a few hundred patients. The Recovery trial was set up in nine days, and has recruited 11,500 Covid patients in 175 hospitals across the UK. Speed was vital in order to catch the rising wave of hospital admissions here and to do so before doctors were overwhelmed. The UK has had Europe's worst coronavirus outbreak with a terrible death toll. But that has also meant there were sufficient patient numbers here to create what is the world's biggest trial of Covid-19 treatments. The trial is led by Prof Peter Horby, who had spent recent years looking at how best to prepare for and respond to disease X, an unknown pathogen that could cause a pandemic.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-53096736>

### **Nigerian researchers announce COVID-19 vaccine**

"The vaccine is real. We have validated it several times. It is targeted at Africans, but will also work for other races. It will work. It cannot be faked. This is a result of the determination. It took a lot of scientific efforts," Kolawole told reporters at Adeleke University in Nigeria's Edo state Friday. "The population of those that need vaccines is more than those that need drugs. That is why the research focused on a vaccine," he noted. The study that the vaccine was based on was initially funded by the Trinity Immunodeficient Laboratory and Helix Biogen Consult, Ogbomosho, with roughly 7.8 million Nigerian nairas (\$20,000), according to the report. Kolawole went on to say that his team had worked extensively on the virus's genome from samples across Africa to select the best potential

vaccine candidates. The researchers of the team had made the possible latent vaccine constructs, Kolawole revealed, without naming the vaccine. He added that it would take a minimum of 18 months to release the vaccine for widespread use, due to a large amount of research, analysis and approvals required by medical authorities.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/nigerian-researchers-announce-covid-19-vaccine/1883955>

### **Nursing homes represent more than 1 in 4 COVID-19 deaths in US**

AP's analysis of data from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services found that nearly half of the more than 15,000 nursing homes have reported suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 as of June 7. About 1 in 5 facilities — or 21 percent — have reported deaths. Nationwide, nursing homes reported nearly 179,000 suspected or confirmed cases among residents and 29,497 deaths. The latest figures include about 95 percent of nursing homes.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/nursing-homes-represent-more-1-4-covid-19-deaths-u-n1231547>

### **Coronavirus Attacks the Lungs. A Federal Agency Just Halted Funding for New Lung Treatments.**

The shift, quietly disclosed on a government website, highlights how the Trump administration is favoring development of vaccines over treatments for the sickest patients.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/19/health/coronavirus-lung-treatment-funding.html>

### **Coronavirus was already in Italy by December, waste water study finds**

Italian scientists say sewage water from two cities contained coronavirus traces in December, long before the country's first confirmed cases. The National Institute of Health (ISS) said water from Milan and Turin showed genetic virus traces on 18 December. It adds to evidence from other countries that the virus may have been circulating much earlier than thought. Chinese officials confirmed the first cases at the end of December. Italy's first case was in mid-February. In May French scientists said tests on samples showed a patient treated for suspected pneumonia near Paris on 27 December actually had the coronavirus. Meanwhile in Spain a study found virus traces in waste water collected in mid-January in Barcelona, some 40 days before the first local case was discovered.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-53106444>

### **Rules for Clinical Trials in a Pandemic**

A new study finds that adding a simple steroid to the treatment of severe Covid-19 cases can significantly reduce deaths. That's another milestone in the battle against the virus. It shows a path for reducing Covid deaths faster through medical innovation and for keeping the health-care system from being overwhelmed as the epidemic spreads. The U.S., unlike Europe and Asia, seems to have decided not to crush the virus but try to reduce its spread to a controllable level.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/rules-for-clinical-trials-in-a-pandemic-11592770800>

### **CureVac Begins Human Trials of Optimized mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine**

CureVac AG (Tübingen, Germany) has received regulatory approval from the German and Belgian authorities to initiate Phase 1 clinical trial of its SARS-CoV-2 vaccine candidate. CureVac, a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company developing a new class of transformative medicines based on optimized mRNA, has received approval from the German Health Authority Paul-Ehrlich-Institute (PEI) and the Belgian Federal Agency for Medicines and Health Products (FAMHP) to begin the Phase 1 clinical trial for its vaccine program to prevent SARS-CoV-2 infection. The trial will be conducted in Germany and Belgium.

<https://www.hospimedica.com/covid-19/articles/294783039/curevac-begins-human-trials-of-optimized-mrna-covid-19-vaccine.html>

### **Glaxosmithkline's coronavirus vaccine starts human trials | Business**

A coronavirus vaccine being developed in partnership with Glaxosmithkline has begun human clinical trials. The FTSE 100 drugs company is providing its adjuvant technology as part of a collaboration with Clover Biopharmaceuticals, of China. After promising pre-clinical results in animals, the vaccine has begun a phase one study in Perth, Australia. Glaxo and Clover are planning a more in-depth phase two trial, which it is hoped will start later in the year. The partnership with Clover is one of several Covid-19 vaccine projects involving Glaxo, which also include a venture with Sanofi, of France. Glaxo, based in west London, is a leading player in the global vaccines market, along with Sanofi and the American companies Merck and Pfizer.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/glaxosmithklines-coronavirus-vaccine-starts-human-trials-j66mqtwhb>

### **China Publishes Coronavirus Genome Data After Latest Beijing Outbreak**

Details published on China's National Microbiology Data Center website revealed the genome data was based on three samples - two human and one environmental - collected on June 11. That was the same day Beijing reported its first new local COVID-19 infection in months. In the eight days since, the city has reported a total of 183 cases, linked to the sprawling wholesale food centre of Xinfadi in the city's southwest. "According to preliminary genomic and epidemiological study results, the virus is from Europe, but it is different from the virus currently spreading in Europe," Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) official Zhang Yong said in an article published on Friday. "It's older than the virus currently spreading in Europe."

<https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/china-publishes-coronavirus-genome-data-after-latest-beijing-covid-19-outbreak-248667>

### **You May Have Antibodies After Coronavirus Infection. But Not for Long.**

It's a question that has haunted scientists since the pandemic began: Does everyone infected with the virus produce antibodies — and if so, how long do they last? Not very long, suggests a new study published Thursday in Nature Medicine. Antibodies — protective proteins made in response to an infection — may last only two to three months, especially in people who never showed symptoms while they were infected. The conclusion does not necessarily mean that these people can be infected a second time, several experts cautioned. Even low levels of powerful neutralizing antibodies may still be protective, as are the immune system's T cells and B cells.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/18/health/coronavirus-antibodies.html>

### **New Study Casts More Doubt on Swedish Coronavirus Immunity Hopes**

Sweden's hopes of getting help from herd immunity in combating the coronavirus received a fresh blow on Thursday, when a new study showed fewer than anticipated had developed antibodies. Sweden's has opted for a more liberal strategy during the pandemic, keeping most schools, restaurants, bars and businesses open as much of Europe hunkered down behind closed doors. While Health Agency officials have stressed so-called herd immunity is not a goal in itself, it has also said the strategy is only to slow the virus enough for health services to cope, not suppress it altogether. However, the study, the most comprehensive in Sweden yet, showed only around 6.1% of Swedes had developed antibodies, well below levels deemed enough to achieve even partial herd immunity.

<https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2020/06/18/world/europe/18reuters-health-coronavirus-sweden-immunity.html>

## **Coronavirus Resurgence**

---

### **Mainland China reports 26 new COVID-19 cases including 22 in Beijing**

Mainland China reported on Sunday 26 new confirmed coronavirus cases for June 20, down from 27 a day earlier, driven largely by the latest outbreak of COVID-19 in the Chinese capital. Of the new infections, 22 were in Beijing, the National Health Commission said in a statement, the same as a day earlier. The city of more than 20 million people reported its first case in the latest wave on June 11. The resurgence has been linked to a wholesale food center in the southwest of Beijing. So far,

227 people in the city have been infected in the latest outbreak. Mainland China reported six new asymptomatic cases, those who are infected with the coronavirus but show no symptoms, down from seven a day earlier. Beijing accounted for three of the new cases.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-china-cases/mainland-china-reports-26-new-covid-19-cases-including-22-in-beijing-idUSKBN23S02Z>

### **Coronavirus: Palestinian Authority closes two West Bank cities after virus spike**

The Palestinian Authority on Saturday said it was temporarily closing the cities of Hebron and Nablus in the occupied West Bank to contain the spread of coronavirus after a sharp rise in infections. "The government decided to close the governorate of Hebron to prevent anyone from entering or exiting, with the exception of the transport of merchandise," Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh said. He told a news conference that Hebron would be closed for five days and Nablus for 48 hours, AFP reported.

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/coronavirus-palestinian-authority-closes-two-west-bank-cities-after-virus-spike>

### **Korea on cusp of erasing gains in virus fight, new cases still on higher plateau**

South Korea's virus fight is dragging on, with a steady rise in new virus cases and untraceable infections, along with a spike in imported cases. Health authorities warned of another possible wave of infections. The country added 49 new cases on Friday, including 32 local infections, raising the total caseload to 12,306, according to the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC). The number of new daily COVID-19 cases marks a slight slowdown from a three-week high of 59 a day earlier. Of the locally transmitted cases, 26 were reported in the densely populated Seoul and nearby metropolitan areas, around half of the country's 50-million population lives. The Seoul metropolitan area accounted for most of the newly added virus cases this month. The country has also seen an uptick in the number of infections outside of the capital region as well as in imported cases.

[https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2020/06/119\\_291488.html](https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2020/06/119_291488.html)

### **Apple to shut some U.S. stores again due to rising COVID-19 cases**

Apple Inc said on Friday it is temporarily shutting some stores again in Florida, Arizona, South Carolina, and North Carolina in the United States, as novel coronavirus cases continue to rise in the country. Shares of the company, which said the closure would affect 11 stores in these states, were down 0.5%.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-apple/apple-to-shut-some-u-s-stores-again-due-to-rising-covid-19-cases-idUSKBN23Q2T6>

### **Coronavirus: India's Chennai back in lockdown as cases spike**

Indian officials have re-imposed a lockdown in the southern city of Chennai (formerly Madras) and three neighbouring districts. Only essential services and neighbourhood grocery shops will be permitted to function under the 12-day lockdown, set to end on 30 June. Chennai is India's sixth-largest city and the capital of Tamil Nadu state. It has more than 37,000 of Tamil Nadu's confirmed 50,000 infections, making it one of India's largest hotspots. With just over 600 deaths in total, the state has a relatively low mortality rate - but its death toll is currently being reviewed after reports suggested that at least 200 deaths in Chennai were not included in the official tally.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-53103774>

### **Costa Rica halts reopening as coronavirus infections rise**

Costa Rica's government will halt reopening the country's economy due to an increase in the number of coronavirus cases over recent days, a senior official said on Friday, in a blow to the Central American nation which has already lost 100,000 jobs. "These are not numbers to think that nothing is wrong and that we can continue with the reopening," Health Minister Daniel Salas said during a news conference. Over the last 24 hours, Costa Rica has registered a record 119 new

coronavirus infections, bringing the total number of confirmed cases to 2,058. Twelve people have died from the highly contagious respiratory disease caused by the virus.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-costa-rica/costa-rica-halts-reopening-as-coronavirus-infections-rise-idUKKBN23R00L>

**Global report: Germany orders local Covid-19 lockdowns as Spain boosts tourism sector**

More than 8,000 people have been quarantined in fresh outbreaks of Covid-19 in three areas of Germany, while the most comprehensive study yet on immunity in Sweden showed very few people had developed antibodies. As governments across Europe continue to ease their restrictions, authorities in North Rhein Westphalia, the southern Berlin district of Neukölln and the central city of Göttingen imposed local lockdowns in an effort to halt the spread of the virus. About 7,000 people were self-isolating and schools and kindergartens were closed in the western state of North Rhein Westphalia after 657 confirmed cases were discovered at Tönnies, a meat processing plant in Rheda-Wiedenbrück.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/18/global-report-germany-orders-local-covid-19-lockdowns-as-spain-boosts-tourism-sector>