

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

30th Mar 2021

Overnight News Roundup

COVID-19 cases in young people are rising in Brazil, report says

- A report published by the Brazil's Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz), has pointed out that COVID-19 cases are on the rise among Brazil's younger population. ['The country is in a situation of collapse of the health system. At the same time, the pandemic has been gaining new characteristics affecting younger age groups: 30-39 years, 40-49 years and 50-59 years.'](#) reads the report.
- Since the beginning of the second wave in Brazil starting last November, demand has increased for health services by symptomatic young patients, Fiocruz researchers said. [It found an increase of more than 500% in infections among people aged 30-39.](#) There was more than 600% increase among people 40-49 and more than 500% increase among people 50-59 in the same period. Although increasing numbers of younger people are becoming infected with the virus, COVID-19 deaths are still more common among older people, the report noted.
- Last Thursday, Brazil's Health ministry announced that more than 100,000 new COVID-19 cases had been confirmed that day alone, the country's highest figure since the pandemic began. [Authorities in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro begged the population to stay home, but thousands are travelling to coastal cities and ignoring recommendations on the first weekend of a 10-day holiday period decreed to contain the increase in COVID-19 infections in the country,](#)
- [Across the country there are over 6,000 people waiting for an ICU bed, according to government data.](#) In 15 of Brazil's 26 states, ICU capacity is at or above 90% full, as the country's P1 variant fuels a second wave far deadlier than the first. Even in Sao Paulo, Brazil's wealthiest state with a sophisticated public hospital network, scores are dying in line waiting for intensive care.

Dying in line: Brazil's crunch for COVID-19 intensive care beds

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Inácio was one of 3,251 people in Brazil killed by COVID-19 on March 23, then the highest daily death toll since the pandemic began. Around the world, nearly one in three COVID-19 deaths were Brazilian. Inácio was one. "He's become a statistic," his son said. As much of the world appears to be emerging from the worst of the pandemic, Brazil's health system is buckling. Across the country there are over 6,000 people waiting for an ICU bed, according to government data. In 15 of Brazil's 26 states, ICU capacity is at or above 90% full, as the country's P1 variant fuels a second wave far deadlier than the first.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-brazil-icu/dying-in-line-brazils-crunch-for-covid-19-intensive-care-beds-idUSKBN2BL26L>

Younger Brazilians Are Dying From Covid in an Alarming New Shift

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Staggering under its worst period of the pandemic, with daily records of caseloads and deaths, Brazil is facing a daunting development: a rising number of deaths among the young. So far this month, according to government data, about 2,030 Brazilians aged 30 to 39 have died from Covid, more than double the number recorded in January. Among those in their 40s, there have been 4,150 fatalities in March, up from 1,823 in January, and for those 20-29, deaths jumped to 505 from 242. "Before, the risk factor to dying from Covid-19 was being older, having some co-morbidity," said

Domingos Alves, a professor of medicine who's part of the national monitoring group. "Now, the risk is being Brazilian."

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-03-26/younger-brazilians-are-dying-from-covid-in-an-alarming-new-shift>

Many Brazilians disregard the pleas to stay at home

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Authorities in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro begged the population to stay home, but thousands of Brazilians are traveling to coastal cities and ignoring recommendations on the first weekend of a 10-day holiday period decreed to contain the increase in COVID-19 infections in the country. Some residents are clearing out and taking advantage of the holidays, despite warnings from authorities. Brazil's two biggest cities, Rio and Sao Paulo, have imposed extensive restrictions on nonessential activities. Their state authorities brought forward holidays to create a 10-day break period, which started Friday.

<https://apnews.com/article/travel-brazil-rio-de-janeiro-coronavirus-pandemic-holidays-f7acdaca7446ca40753aac5c77cb3a>

Pfizer, Moderna COVID-19 vaccines highly effective after first shot in real-world use, -U.S. study

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COVID-19 vaccines developed by Pfizer Inc with BioNTech SE and Moderna Inc reduced risk of infection by 80% two weeks or more after the first of two shots, according to data from a real-world U.S. study released on Monday. The risk of infection fell 90% by two weeks after the second shot, the study of nearly 4,000 U.S. healthcare personnel and first responders found. The results validate earlier studies that had indicated the vaccines begin to work soon after a first dose, and confirm that they also prevent asymptomatic infections. Some countries dealing with limited vaccine supplies have pushed back schedules for second doses with the hope of getting some protection to more people. U.S. public health officials, however, continue to recommend two doses be given on the schedule authorized by regulators based on clinical trials.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-vaccines/pfizer-moderna-covid-19-vaccines-highly-effective-after-first-shot-in-real-world-use-us-study-idUSKBN2BL246>

COVID-19 vaccines found to be highly effective in real-world CDC study

The U.S. government's first look at the real-world use of COVID-19 vaccines found their effectiveness was nearly as robust as it was in controlled studies. The two vaccines available since December — Pfizer and Moderna — were highly effective at 90% after two doses, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported Monday. In testing, the vaccines were about 95% effective in preventing COVID-19. "This is very reassuring news," said the CDC's Mark Thompson, the study's lead author. "We have a vaccine that's working very well."

<https://www.inquirer.com/health/coronavirus/covid-19-coronavirus-vaccines-cdc-study-results-20210329.html>

'Real world' study by CDC shows Pfizer and Moderna vaccines were 90% effective

A new study suggests the messenger RNA vaccines produced by Moderna and the Pfizer-BioNTech partnership appeared to be 90% effective in preventing Covid-19 infection in a real-world setting. The study was released Monday in Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, an online journal published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The study followed nearly 4,000 health care workers, first responders, and other essential workers in eight U.S. locations as the first Covid vaccines were rolled out starting in December. Participants were tested weekly to look for all cases of Covid infection, even asymptomatic ones.

<https://www.statnews.com/2021/03/29/real-world-study-by-cdc-shows-pfizer-and-moderna-vaccines-were-90-effective>

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Fauci says new surge in COVID-19 cases has three main causes

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Travel, new variants and premature rollbacks of public health restrictions are all contributing factors to the uptick in new COVID-19 cases. Anthony Fauci told CBS that only with more vaccinations can public health measures be safely relaxed.

<https://thehill.com/changing-america/well-being/prevention-cures/545393-fauci-says-new-surge-in-covid-19-cases-has-three>

Report shows Mexico's COVID-19 death toll is more than 60% of what has been revealed

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The Mexican government released a report Saturday indicating more than 321,000 people have died from COVID-19. The deaths were tallied from the beginning of the epidemic through February 14, showing 294,287 tied to the coronavirus pandemic. There have been 26,996 confirmed COVID-19 deaths since February 15. According to official data reported to John Hopkins University, 201,623 people had died from the ravaging virus as of Monday

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9410927/Mexicos-real-COVID-19-death-toll-stands-321-000.html>

Canada to pause AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine use for those under 55, require new risk analysis

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Canadian health officials said on Monday they would stop offering AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine to people under age 55 and require a new analysis of the shot's benefits and risks based on age and gender. The moves follow reports from Europe of rare but serious blood clots, bleeding and in some cases death after vaccination, mainly in young women. No such cases have been reported in Canada, with about 307,000 AstraZeneca doses administered. "We are pausing the use of AstraZeneca vaccine to adults under 55 years of age pending further risk benefit analysis," Canada's deputy chief public health officer Howard Njoo said at a media briefing. Njoo later noted that Canada was taking this "prudent" approach because alternative vaccines are available. Most of Canada's supply so far has come from Pfizer Inc and Moderna Inc.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-canada-astrazeneca/canada-panel-recommends-pause-on-giving-astrazeneca-covid-19-vaccine-to-under-55s-cbc-idUSKBN2BL2GY>

Canada stops using AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine for people under 55

Provinces have suspended the use of AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine for people under age 55 after a federal advisory committee recommended against injecting it into younger adults due to reports of "rare" blood clotting events, especially in women in Europe. After P.E.I., Manitoba and Quebec announced they would pause AstraZeneca vaccinations except for older Canadians, Health Canada hastily called a news conference to say the federal regulator still believes the vaccine is safe and effective in preventing serious illness and death, especially in older Canadians. That group is at higher risk for catching COVID-19, getting very ill — including developing blood clots — and dying, said Dr. Supriya Sharma, Health Canada's chief medical adviser.

<https://www.thestar.com/politics/federal/2021/03/29/canada-to-issue-new-guidelines-for-use-of-astrazenecas-covid-19-vaccine.html>

'Right now I'm scared': CDC director warns of a coming spike in Covid-19 case counts

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As Covid-19 cases begin again to spike throughout the United States, CDC Director Rochelle Walensky issued an urgent plea to Americans Monday to continue following public health measures.

"We have so much to look forward to, so much promise and potential of where we are and so much reason for hope, but right now I'm scared," said Walensky, who noted she has begun experiencing a "recurring" feeling of "impending doom." The plea came amid news that positive Covid-19 cases have increased by 10.6% compared to the previous seven-day period. Hospitalizations and deaths, which are a lagging metric, also rose over the last seven-day period, by 4.2% and 2.6%, respectively.

<https://www.statnews.com/2021/03/29/warning-impending-doom-cdc-director-covid-19/>

CDC head pleads with Americans as COVID-19 cases rise

"I'm going to lose the script, and I'm going to reflect on the recurring feeling I have of impending doom," said Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Rochelle Walensky, MD, MPH, today during the White House COVID-19 press briefing. "We have so much to look forward to, so much promise and potential of where we are, and so much reason for hope, but right now I'm scared." Growing visibly emotional, Walensky explained that after weeks of going down or remaining stable, COVID-19 cases across the country have jumped again, as has happened at least twice in the past year before the nation experienced a major surge in virus activity.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/03/cdc-head-pleads-americans-covid-19-cases-rise>

CDC director warns of 'impending doom' on potential new COVID-19 surge | TheHill

The director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Monday warned of "impending doom" over rising coronavirus cases, telling the public that even though vaccines are being rolled out quickly, a fourth surge could happen if people don't start taking precautions. "I'm going to lose the script, and I'm going to reflect on the recurring feeling I have of impending doom. We have so much to look forward to so much promise and potential of where we are, and so much reason for hope. But right now I'm scared," CDC Director Rochelle Walensky said during a White House briefing Monday. "We do not have the luxury of inaction," Walensky added.

<https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/545375-cdc-director-warns-of-impending-doom-on-potential-new-covid-surge>

Happy Monday? England embarks on major easing of lockdown

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It's being dubbed Happy Monday, with open-air swimmers donning their wetsuits for the first time in months and rusty golfers doing their best to get their drives down the middle of the fairway. England has embarked on a major easing of its latest coronavirus lockdown that came into force at the start of the year, with families and friends able to meet up in outdoor spaces and many sports permitted once again. And, as if right on cue, the weather is turning, with temperatures rising to levels more akin to southern Spain at this time of year.

<https://apnews.com/article/england-major-easing-coronavirus-lockdown-4235397441cbd2ee081f12a70339791f>

'Happy Monday': English lockdown measures ease but Johnson urges caution

England's stay-at-home lockdown order ended on Monday with people allowed to meet up outside in groups of six for the first time in nearly three months, though Prime Minister Boris Johnson urged caution due to rising coronavirus cases in Europe. Johnson announced a third national lockdown in England on Jan. 4, but has said he plans to proceed with a "cautious and irreversible" route out of restrictions, underpinned by a quick rollout of COVID-19 vaccines. That contrasts with much of Europe, with Germany and France among countries contending with a third wave of COVID-19 infections and hospitalisations

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-johnson-idUSKBN2BK0PA>

Rule of six and weddings resume as millions take step out of lockdown

Friends and families will be reunited from today as England takes a second major step out of lockdown. Two households or groups of up to six can socialise in parks and gardens once more,

while outdoor sports facilities can reopen and small weddings can resume. Weddings will be limited to six people, including the couple, for at least two weeks until April 12, when 15 guests will be allowed. Boris Johnson urged Brits to take caution as Covid cases continue to rise across Europe, amid fears the new variants could trigger another UK wave despite more than 30 million receiving a jab.

<https://metro.co.uk/2021/03/29/rule-of-six-and-weddings-resume-as-millions-take-step-out-of-lockdown-14320517/>

The Biden administration is developing a national coronavirus 'vaccine passport' scheme for Americans

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The Biden administration is working on a vaccine passport program that would allow people to prove they have received a coronavirus vaccination, in order to enter venues which have been closed due to social distancing requirements, such as offices or movie theatres. Five officials, who spoke anonymously, told the Post that the White House is pushing efforts by federal agencies and private companies to develop the scheme. Vaccine passports have been widely touted around the world as a way for various industries to start returning to normal whilst minimising the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks and could be an entry requirement for anything from sports arenas, music venues, or restaurants, to international travel.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/biden-administration-developing-national-coronavirus-132820782.html>

Biden faces calls to break COVID-19 vaccine patents. Would that boost global supply?

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Some lawmakers are calling on the Biden administration to suspend patent protections on COVID-19 vaccines to help boost supply in other countries. And last week, they took a shot at pitching the idea to White House officials. After House Speaker Nancy Pelosi sent a request to review proposals for breaking COVID-19 drug and vaccine patents, the White House held a meeting last week, CNBC reports, citing people familiar with the situation. The prevailing view among supporters is that "we're not safe until the world is safe," one source told CNBC. The United States has administered more than 143 million coronavirus vaccine doses, while some countries have yet to start vaccinations.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/biden-faces-calls-to-break-covid-19-drug-and-vaccine-patents-would-boost-global-supply>

UK's 'wall of vaccination' against Covid is 'leaky', Professor Chris Whitty says

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England's CMO acknowledged the wall will get stronger when top-up doses are dished out en masse in April. But when asked if the UK was at risk of a third wave when restrictions are eased, he said it is 'not complete.' He addressed the country from Downing Street's new £2.6million White House-style press briefing room

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9415429/Britains-wall-vaccination-against-Covid-leaky-Professor-Chris-Whitty-warns.html>

UK PM Johnson: We don't know how strong our defences are against future COVID waves

Britain does not yet know how strong its defences against future waves of coronavirus will be, despite the success of the vaccine rollout, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Monday. "The vaccine rollout has been very impressive, and thanks to everybody who's been involved in it, but what we don't know is exactly how strong our fortifications now are, how robust our defences are against another wave," Johnson told a news conference.

https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-defences-idUSKBN2BL2C6?taid=60621de2c8c94b0001854810&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter

Family doctors advocate for more coronavirus vaccines, say it will reduce hesitancy

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Family doctors play a big role in reducing coronavirus vaccine hesitancy, especially for those who are used to being vaccinated there, said Dr. Pamela Rockwell. Rockwell, who has practiced for more than 20 years, said family physicians are already answering patient questions about the coronavirus vaccine and are ready to help. "Whether I'm doing virtual medicine now or in person medicine, I am able to answer their questions and there hasn't been a single patient that has not been sort of convinced," said Rockwell, who currently practices through the University of Michigan health system. According to a study by the Kaiser Family Foundation, 75% of people would be very likely to get the coronavirus vaccine from their doctor and 38% chose this as their most preferred vaccination site

<https://www.mlive.com/public-interest/2021/03/family-doctors-advocate-for-more-coronavirus-vaccines-say-it-will-reduce-hesitancy.html>

'Instead we pray': Fearing lost wages, India's urban poor shun COVID-19 vaccine

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As a second wave of COVID-19 cases sweeps India, some poor city workers are shunning vaccination because they fear losing a day's pay to get the jab, or possible side effects that could force them to skip work for longer. Authorities are scrambling to open vaccination centres in the slums, but uptake has been slower than expected - exposing deep inequalities in healthcare access and high rates of vaccine hesitancy, campaigners said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-india-vaccine-trfn/instead-we-pray-fearing-lost-wages-indias-urban-poor-shun-covid-19-vaccine-idUSKBN2BL13B>

India coronavirus: The high-risk young demanding Covid jobs

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Shikha Goel frantically began scouring the internet for information on Covid-19 and cancer. Soon she realised that she was at higher risk of infection and, if she caught the virus, the consequences could be dangerous. The possibility of a "double whammy" frightened her, but also strengthened her precautionary measures while visiting hospitals. She says vaccination is the more "secure way" of keeping Covid away, but she can't get the jab because she is not eligible for it. And she is not alone - India has tens of thousands of young patients who are in the high risk category and need vaccination urgently.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-56522068>

India's Maharashtra considers total lockdown as COVID cases rise

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India's richest state, Maharashtra, is considering imposing a strict lockdown this week after recording the highest one-day jump in coronavirus infections of any Indian state since last March, officials said. Maharashtra tightened travel restrictions and imposed night curfews as it reported 40,414 new coronavirus cases on Sunday, almost two-thirds of the national total, many of them in the densely populated financial capital Mumbai.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/29/indias-maharashtra-considers-total-lockdown-as-covid-cases-rise>

India's coronavirus cases peak over 12 million for first time

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-India reported the highest daily increase in coronavirus cases in five months on Monday, with the second wave of the disease driven by surging infections in the country's richest state Maharashtra. A total of 68,020 new coronavirus cases were reported in the last 24 hours, the health ministry said. It was the highest daily rise since Oct. 11, according to a Reuters tally. India has been reporting a

spike in cases - above the 60,000 mark - for three consecutive days, though Monday's rise was still below September's peak of more than 90,000 cases a day. The total number of cases since the epidemic began a year ago crossed the 12 million mark, making India the hardest hit country outside the United States and Brazil.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-india-cases-idUSKBN2BL0I6>

Brisbane heads into snap three-day COVID lockdown

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Australian authorities announced a snap three-day COVID-19 lockdown in the northern city of Brisbane from Monday afternoon, as they attempt to stamp out an outbreak of the virulent UK variant of the virus. About two million people in the city, the country's third-largest and the capital of Queensland state, will be required to stay home from 5pm local time (07:00 GMT) except for essential work, healthcare, grocery shopping or exercise.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/29/brisbane-heads-into-snap-three-day-covid-lockdown>

Australia's third-largest city to enter three-day COVID-19 lockdown

Australian authorities announced a snap three-day COVID-19 lockdown in the northern city of Brisbane from Monday afternoon, as they attempt to stamp out an outbreak of the virulent UK variant of the virus. About 2 million people in the city, the country's third largest and the capital of Queensland state, will be required to stay home from 5 p.m. local time except for essential work, healthcare, grocery shopping or exercise. "I know this is a really big call and I know it is really tough," Queensland state Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk told reporters. "We have Easter coming up, we have school holidays coming up but let's do it now and let's do it right."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-australia-lockdown-idUSKBN2BL00N>

Brisbane lockdown sends Australian sports teams scrambling

Australia's professional sports leagues scrambled to put contingency plans in place on Monday after Queensland authorities announced a snap three-day lockdown in state capital Brisbane to deal with a COVID-19 outbreak. About 2 million people in Brisbane, the country's third largest city, will be required to stay home from 5 p.m. local time except for essential work, healthcare, grocery shopping or exercise. Australian Football League (AFL) team Brisbane Lions will remain in the southern state of Victoria, having awaited developments since their match against Geelong Cats on Friday.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-sport-australia/brisbane-lockdown-sends-australian-sports-teams-scrambling-idUSL4N2LR00I>

Survey Finds COVID-19 Vaccination Hesitancy Remains Unchanged

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Daily national surveys by Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) show that although COVID-19 vaccine uptake has increased, the proportion of vaccine-hesitant adults has remained unchanged. The concerns about adverse effects (AEs) remain high, especially among females, Black adults, and those with an eligible health condition, according to the study. "Prior research by the CDC has found that Black and Hispanic adults are the least likely to receive the annual flu vaccine each year," said Alex Reinhart, assistant teaching professor in CMU's Department of Statistics & Data Science and a member of the Delphi Research Group, in a press release. "Our survey suggests that COVID vaccine hesitancy follows a similar trend."

<https://www.pharmacytimes.com/view/survey-finds-covid-19-vaccination-hesitancy-remains-unchanged>

US COVID deaths could have been 'decreased substantially'

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The White House coronavirus task force coordinator under former President Donald Trump says she believes the COVID-19 death toll in the country would have been "decreased substantially" had the

previous government responded more effectively in the early days of the outbreak. Dr Deborah Birx said that while the initial surge in March last year caught health officials off guard, better messaging and coordination from the government could have reduced the number of deaths later

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/29/trump-covid-official-deaths-could-have-been-substantially-lower>