

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 29th Jun 2020

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### News Highlights

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#### **Cases rise sharply in Florida, Texas as reopening stalls**

New coronavirus cases continue to rise in the U.S., passing the grim mark of more than 40,000 in a single day. [Florida alone contributed close to 9,000 cases and the state, along with Texas, moved to close down its bars](#). Both states had been at the forefront of calls to reopen the economy, but both now are under scrutiny with rising infection levels and increased hospitalisation rates.

#### **Study suggests asymptomatic carriers may not develop immunity**

[A new Chinese study published this week in the journal 'Nature' suggests that asymptomatic people who test positive for Covid-19 may not develop any lasting immunity](#), as they have few to no detectable antibodies only weeks after infection. If the research holds up, it would be detrimental to the theories of 'herd immunity' and 'diplomatic passports,' as getting the infection once does not guarantee that one cannot get it again.

#### **Fears of second wave in France as cases rise sharply**

A sharp increase in the number of new infections has put a damper on the reopening efforts in France. [French health authorities confirmed 1,588 new cases on June 26](#), the largest spike since the end of May and more than three times the daily average number of cases in June. Close to 30,000 people have died in France since the epidemic began at the start of the year

#### **India cases surge as capital Delhi faces medical staff challenge**

Despite one of the world's longest and toughest lockdowns, India's case numbers are increasing dramatically, with over half a million cases and 16,500 deaths. [New Delhi has 77,000 cases currently, with some analysts estimating over 400,000 infected by the end of July](#). Health Minister, Manish Sisodia, said cases could be less than estimated but the availability of health staff to fight the pandemic could prove to be a major challenge.

### Lockdown Exit

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#### **Ireland to keep its 14-day quarantine on British travellers: Sunday Times**

Ireland will maintain a 14-day quarantine for travellers from the British mainland in July even as it plans to ease travel restrictions with some countries, the Sunday Times newspaper reported, citing a memo. The memo with the Irish cabinet committee said it was "highly unlikely" that Britain would be included in Ireland's safe travel list, the report added. Ireland plans to lift from July 9 a 14-day quarantine for people arriving from countries that have also suppressed the coronavirus, the Irish government said on Thursday.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-ireland-britain/ireland-to-keep-its-14-day-quarantine-on-british-travellers-sunday-times-idUSKBN23Z02L>

#### **Australia's Victoria state mandates coronavirus testing for travellers**

Australia's Victoria state will implement mandatory coronavirus tests for returning travellers after a

sharp spike in infections over the past two weeks, the state's premier said on Sunday. The country's second-most populous state had 49 new cases on Sunday, its highest in more than two months and the 12th consecutive day of double-digit rises. The rest of Australia has seen almost no infections. "Much like a bushfire, putting this out is challenging," Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews told a press conference, alluding to wildfires at the end of last year that burnt through vast swaths of the country. "Containing it, though, is something that we can do, and test and trace is the most effective thing to do."

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/australias-victoria-state-mandates-coronavirus-testing-for-travellers/ar-BB1638vB>

### **Patient 91: How Vietnam saved a British pilot and kept a clean Covid-19 sheet**

"If I'd been almost anywhere else on the planet, I'd be dead. They would have flicked the switch after 30 days," says Stephen Cameron from his hospital bed. The 43-year-old Scottish pilot spent 68 days on a ventilator, thought to be a longer stretch of time than any patient in the UK. He did so not in a hospital in his hometown of Motherwell, but in Vietnam's sprawling and hectic Ho Chi Minh City, with no close friends or family for thousands of miles. Cameron, the last Covid-19 patient in an intensive care unit in Vietnam, has been the sickest doctors have had to deal with during the outbreak. The country, home to 95 million people, has seen only a few hundred confirmed cases, single-digit ICU admissions and not a single recorded death. So rare was a case of Cameron's severity in Vietnam, every minute detail of his recovery was reported in national newspapers and on TV news bulletins. He's now known nationwide as Patient 91, the moniker given to him by public health officials when he fell ill in March.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-53196009>

### **China, S. Korea report new cases in double digits**

China has reported an uptick in new coronavirus cases, a day after the nation's CDC said it expects an outbreak in Beijing to be brought under control soon. The National Health Commission said Saturday that 21 cases had been confirmed nationwide in the latest 24-hour period, including 17 in the nation's capital. City officials have temporarily shut a huge wholesale food market where the virus spread widely, re-closed schools and locked down some neighborhoods. A report by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention said that testing has found only a few infected people without a link to the market and that the steps taken mean the risk of further spread is low, the official Xinhua News Agency said. Anyone leaving Beijing is required to have a negative result from a nucleic acid test within the previous seven days. Many Chinese are traveling during a four-day holiday weekend that ends Sunday.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/13495011>

### **Mexican economy shrinks record 17.3% in April as industry swoons**

Mexico's economy posted a record contraction in April, official data showed on Friday, as the effects of the coronavirus lockdown devastated economic activity, particularly in manufacturing. Adjusted for seasonal swings, Latin America's second-biggest economy contracted 17.3% from March, the biggest fall since modern data began being published in early 1993, according to figures put out by national statistics agency INEGI. The decline, however, was not as sharp as the 19.4% drop forecast by a Reuters poll of economists. In unadjusted terms, the economy shrank 19.9% in April compared with a year earlier, the figures showed.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mexico-economy-gdp/mexican-economy-shrinks-record-17-3-in-april-as-industry-swoons-idUSKBN23X1M6>

### **Costa Rica to accept tourists from countries with virus under control**

Costa Rica will open its international airports on Aug. 1 to tourists from countries that have "controlled transmission" of coronavirus, Health Minister Daniel Salas said on Friday. Starting this

weekend, Costa Rica will also open more public spaces such as movie theaters, shopping centers and beaches in most of the country, Salas said.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-costarica/costa-rica-to-accept-tourists-from-countries-with-virus-under-control-idUKKBN23X2PT>

### **Viruses do not take breaks. The world can learn from how the DRC is beating Ebola**

The Ebola outbreak in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has ended. Thursday marked 42 days since the last person with Ebola was discharged from care, double the maximum length of time it takes for symptoms to appear. Nearly two years of hard work and leadership by the communities in DRC has paid off, with the end of the first Ebola outbreak in a conflict zone. It's a time for celebration but not complacency. Viruses do not take breaks. DRC's 10th Ebola outbreak may have come to a close but an 11th, in the north-west part of the country, was detected on 1 June. Cases are appearing 240km away from Mbandaka, the centre of this latest outbreak.

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/jun/25/viruses-do-not-take-breaks-heres-what-the-world-can-learn-from-how-the-drc-beat-ebola>

### **South Africa to reopen casinos and cinemas despite COVID-19 spread**

Tourism is an important revenue-earner and three months of lockdown has left many businesses fighting for survival. "We are continuing with the effort to reactivate the tourism sector so that we can save businesses and jobs in the sector," Tourism Minister Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane said in a televised briefing, after warning last month that up to 600,000 jobs were at risk if the sector remained shut until September. Business travel has been allowed from June 1, but overnight leisure stays are still forbidden to try to contain the spread of the virus.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-safrica/south-africa-to-reopen-casinos-and-cinemas-despite-covid-19-spread-idUKKBN23X2K2>

### **COVID-19: France reports more than 1,500 new cases since end-May**

France reported more than 1,500 new confirmed novel coronavirus cases on Friday (Jun 26), a spike unseen since May 30, while the number of additional fatalities linked to the virus rose by the highest amount in three days. French health authorities said in a statement the total of newly confirmed infections rose by 1,588, way above both the daily average of 498 seen over the last seven days and the 430 daily average since the beginning of June. The number of people who died from the disease increased by 26 to 29,778, compared to 21 on Thursday and 11 on Wednesday and an average of 19 over the past seven days.

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/world/covid-19-coronavirus-france-1500-new-cases-12875140>

### **Corona and the Age of Ubuntu**

Melinda Gates, speaking on CNN, predicted that the pandemic would devastate the developing world and that she would imagine bodies lying on the streets of African countries. This was when refrigerated trucks were carrying off the corpses of COVID-19 victims from US hospitals, and sports arenas were being repurposed as intensive care units in the US. It seemed inevitable that Africa, which has felt the brunt of virtually all epidemics to hit the world over the last 50 years, would become the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak. If even the highly advanced medical teams and state-of-the-art equipment in Europe and the US could not halt its relentless march, what hope had Africa? Well, the hammer did not fall – or rather, it fell rather lightly, causing very little damage, relatively speaking. Let's look at some comparative figures as at May 20:

<https://southerntimesafrica.com/site/news/corona-and-the-age-of-ubuntu>

### **Beijing eases lockdown as mass testing gathers pace**

Beijing has partially lifted a weeks-long lockdown imposed in the Chinese capital to head off a feared second wave of coronavirus infections after three million samples were taken in two weeks, officials said. Dozens of residential compounds across the city were shut down, with authorities rolling out a

mass testing campaign to root out any remaining cases. A vast majority of them are linked to the sprawling Xinfadi market in the city's south that supplies about 80 percent of Beijing's fresh produce and meat. The lockdown was eased on Tuesday for seven apartment blocks after residents tested negative for the virus, officials said at a Friday briefing. The remaining blocks are still in lockdown. Eleven new virus cases across Beijing were announced on Friday, bringing the total number of infections in the capital since the June 11 outbreak to 280.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-06-beijing-eases-lockdown-mass-pace.html>

### **COVID-19 cases triple in Latin America in only a month**

Number of cases in Latin America and Caribbean have risen from nearly 690,000 in late May to more than 2 million, says PAHO

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/americas/covid-19-cases-triple-in-latin-america-in-only-a-month/1889096>

## **Exit Strategies**

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### **Coronavirus: UK 'on knife edge' ahead of lockdown easing, scientist warns**

The UK remains "on a knife edge" and must act "sensibly" over the summer months to stop a second wave of coronavirus, a scientist has warned. Sir Jeremy Farrar said he is "worried" about a surge in cases ahead of pubs and restaurants reopening next month. Home Secretary Priti Patel said people have to be "conscientious" about the risk of a second wave. She said the city of Leicester could face a localised lockdown after a rise in cases. Sir Jeremy, a member of the government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (Sage) and director of the Wellcome Trust, has warned there could be a "very nasty rebound" of the virus in the winter. He told the BBC's Andrew Marr Show: "We're on a knife edge, it's very precarious the situation, particularly in England at the moment, and I would anticipate we would see an increase in new cases over the coming weeks."

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53212435>

### **English tourists may face quarantine in Scotland if cases rise south of the border**

English holiday-makers crossing the border into Scotland could be told to go into quarantine for two weeks or face a fine if cases of coronavirus rise again. On Friday Nicola Sturgeon said Scotland was edging towards "total elimination" of Covid-19 after no new deaths were recorded on a weekday for the first time since March. However, Scottish government sources say there is a fear that the progress in suppressing the virus could be undone when the tourism season begins next month, with an expected influx of visitors from England. Confirmed cases of Covid-19 continued to rise in England last week. The first minister warned of "devastating consequences" after the hot weather prompted thousands of people in England to flout lockdown rules to visit the south of Scotland.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/scotland/english-tourists-may-face-quarantine-in-scotland-if-cases-rise-south-of-the-border-l0k6th37c>

### **Leicester MP demands government initiate local lockdown**

The Labour MP for Leicester feels that there needs to be a lockdown in the city to quell the coronavirus spread. Through the weekend Claudia Webbe, Labour MP for Leicester East called for the government to impose a local lockdown on her constituency. She branded the situation there "a perfect storm" and wanted the government to act.

<https://www.lbc.co.uk/radio/presenters/ian-payne/leicester-local-lockdown-labour-mp-demands-government-impose-local-lockdown/>

### **Coronavirus: More care urged for pregnant BAME patients**

NHS England is asking doctors and midwives to provide more checks and support to black, Asian and ethnic-minority (BAME) pregnant women because of their greater risk from coronavirus. Black mums-to-be are eight times more likely to be admitted to hospital with Covid-19 than white pregnant women. Pregnant Asian women are four times as likely to end up in hospital. Maternity

services remain open and mums-to-be are urged to keep in touch with their midwives to stay safe.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-53191235>

### **Amid coronavirus surge, Texas has a contact tracing problem: reporting cases by fax**

Manual, archaic technology and people's mistrust of government agencies are blunting contact tracing efforts, even as the persistent rise in coronavirus cases forces several Western and Southern states to dial back their reopening plans. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious diseases expert, raised a question Friday as to whether contact tracing is even worth the endeavor. And in Texas, a health official in Austin revealed this week that information about hundreds of new cases is pouring in daily across the state via an archaic form of technology: the fax machine. That has made the confirmation of positive cases extremely time-consuming, the official said, which in turn has hindered contact tracing, a labor-intensive commitment that involves calling people who are confirmed ill with COVID-19, asking for their recent contacts and reaching out to those people to determine if they need testing and if they should self-isolate, all in the hopes of breaking the chains of infection. "The cases we receive come in by fax machine," Dr. Mark Escott, the interim medical director and health authority for Austin Public Health, told Travis County commissioners. "And sometimes those faxes are positives and sometimes they're negatives. Sometimes they have information like the person's phone number that was tested and sometimes they don't. So we have a whole team of people who have to sort through more than a thousand faxes a day to sort out the positives versus the negatives."

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/amid-coronavirus-surge-texas-has-contact-tracing-problem-reporting-cases-n1232212>

### **IMF's Georgieva says virus crisis could ultimately test IMF resources**

International Monetary Fund Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said on Friday that the global economic crisis spurred by the coronavirus could ultimately test the Fund's \$1 trillion in resources, "but we are not there yet." Georgieva told a Reuters Newsmaker webcast event that it was now clear that recovery from global business and travel lockdowns would have to get underway amid the widespread presence of the virus, and that IMF member countries were standing by to provide more support to the Fund if necessary.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/imf-georgieva/imfs-georgieva-says-virus-crisis-could-ultimately-test-imf-resources-idUSW1N27102G>

### **Australia gets second wave of toilet paper hoarding - The Jakarta Post**

Australia's supermarket chains on Friday reintroduced purchase limits on toilet paper and other household items as a spike in coronavirus cases in the state of Victoria set off a fresh round of panic-buying over fears of a new stay-at-home order. Woolworths Group Ltd and Coles Group Ltd, which together account for two-thirds of Australian grocery sales, said they were once again limiting purchases of toilet paper and paper towels to one or two packs per person after photos circulated on social media showing empty shelves in stores. The buying restrictions - and images of stripped shelves - are a reminder of Australia's initial response to the arrival of COVID-19 when shoppers stockpiled household goods in anticipation of a protracted shutdown.

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/06/26/australia-gets-second-wave-of-toilet-paper-hoarding.html>

## **Partisan Exits**

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### **Coronavirus: US has 'serious problem', says Fauci**

US infectious disease chief Dr Anthony Fauci says the nation has a "serious problem" as 16 states reel from a spike in Covid-19 cases. At the first White House task force briefing in two months, Dr Fauci said: "The only way we're going to end it is by ending it together." As health experts said more must be done to slow the spread, Vice-President Mike Pence praised US "progress". More than 40,000 new cases were recorded across the US on Friday. The total of 40,173, given by Johns

Hopkins University, was the highest daily total so far, exceeding the record set only the previous day. There are over 2.4 million confirmed infections and more than 125,000 deaths nationwide - more than any other country. During Friday's briefing, the White House task force also urged millennials to get tested, even if they are asymptomatic.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-53200834>

### **Greg Abbott expresses regret over bar reopenings amid coronavirus**

"If I could go back and redo anything, it probably would have been to slow down the opening of bars," Abbott said in a TV interview Friday evening.

<https://www.texastribune.org/2020/06/26/greg-abbott-texas-bars-regret/>

### **Trump Administration Files Supreme Court Brief To End Obamacare Amid COVID-19 Crisis**

The Trump administration filed a brief Thursday night calling on the U.S. Supreme Court to invalidate the Affordable Care Act — which allows millions of Americans to get health insurance coverage — just as the nation smashed a record for new COVID-19 cases in a single day. Solicitor General Noel Francisco argued in a brief that because Congress in 2017 invalidated the law's individual coverage mandate — by dropping a tax penalty for those without health insurance — the "entire ACA thus must fall." The court is scheduled to hear arguments later this year, but a decision might not come until 2021. The move threatens health care coverage for more than 20 million Americans.

[https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/obamacare-supreme-court-brief-trump-coronavirus\\_n\\_5ef57235c5b612083c4b567a?ncid=other\\_twitter\\_coo09wqtham&utm\\_campaign=share\\_twitter](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/obamacare-supreme-court-brief-trump-coronavirus_n_5ef57235c5b612083c4b567a?ncid=other_twitter_coo09wqtham&utm_campaign=share_twitter)

## **Continued Lockdown**

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### **Mexican health ministry confirms 4,410 new coronavirus cases, 602 deaths**

Mexico's health ministry on Saturday reported 4,410 new confirmed coronavirus infections and 602 additional fatalities, bringing the total in the country to 212,802 cases and 26,381 deaths. The government has said the real number of infected people is likely significantly higher than the confirmed cases.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-health-coronavirus-mexico/mexican-health-ministry-confirms-4410-new-coronavirus-cases-602-deaths-idUKKBN23Z005>

### **AP Interview: Delhi minister says city faces virus challenge**

The acting health minister of India's capital said that New Delhi is facing a shortage of "trained and experienced" health care workers, providing a major challenge in a city that is the epicenter of the country's coronavirus outbreak. With over 77,000 cases, New Delhi has been hit harder than any other Indian city. Infections had been projected to rise to half a million by the end of July in Delhi, the territory that includes the capital. With the rate of infections slowing down, the number has been revised to 400,000, and Acting Health Minister Manish Sisodia said he was hopeful that it could be less. "But we can't be under any illusions," he told The Associated Press in an interview on Saturday, when India's total caseload passed half a million. "The availability of medical staff is a big challenge that (other) states need to address as well."

<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/ap-interview-delhi-minister-city-faces-virus-challenge-71492935>

### **Texas and Florida close bars after explosion of COVID-19 cases**

The governors of Florida and Texas closed down the bars Friday to slow down the spread of the coronavirus that has been rampaging at record levels through their states. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis ordered the bar shutdown as the state health department reported 8,942 new COVID-19 cases, shattering the previous record of 5,508 set just two days ago. But DeSantis, who has been resisting calls to slow down the reopening of his state, left it to Halsey Beshears, the Secretary of Department of Business and Professional Regulation, to convey his message in a tweet

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/texas-close-bars-limit-restaurant-dining-due-explosion-covid-19-n1232233>

### **Texas governor orders bars to close amid surge in virus cases**

Texas Governor Greg Abbott ordered bars to close on Friday amid a surge in coronavirus cases in the second most populous state in the country. As Abbott outlined a series of measures aimed at stemming the spread of COVID-19 in Texas, the chief executive of Harris County, the state's largest, issued a stay-at-home advisory and raised the threat level to Level 1, or "severe." Under Abbott's executive order, bars are required to close but may continue to provide delivery and take-out service.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200626-texas-governor-orders-bars-to-close-amid-surge-in-virus-cases>

### **Asia Today: India's cases spike again to near half-million**

India neared half a million confirmed coronavirus cases Friday with its biggest 24-hour spike of 17,296 new infections, prompting a delay in resumption of regular train services of more than a month. The new cases took India's total to 490,401. The Health Ministry also reported 407 more deaths in the previous 24 hours, taking its total fatalities to 15,301. The ministry said the recovery rate was continuing to improve at 57.43%. Also, deaths per 100,000 stood at 1.86 against the world average of 6.24 per 100,000, it said. The actual numbers of infections and deaths from COVID-19, like elsewhere in the world, are thought to be far higher due to a number of reasons including limited testing.

<https://apnews.com/521e48581b2cd58e217f7ee6f02fe6da>

### **Record rise in virus cases as Ukraine warns of 'serious wave'**

Ukraine on Friday reported a record daily increase in coronavirus cases as authorities warned lockdowns may have to be re-imposed if people continued to flout restrictions. Health authorities recorded 1,109 new coronavirus infections in the previous 24 hours, bringing Ukraine's total to more than 41,000. "People have ceased to comply with restrictions," Prime Minister Denys Shmygal wrote on his Telegram channel late Thursday. "If we want to preserve the economy and not quarantine the country, the only way is to adhere to restrictions together." Ukrainian officials have repeatedly complained that people are ignoring social distancing and other safety rules after anti-virus restrictions were eased last month.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-06-virus-cases-ukraine.html>

### **Millions of Yemeni Children May Starve Amid Pandemic, UNICEF Warns**

Millions of children could be pushed to the brink of starvation as the coronavirus pandemic sweeps across war-torn Yemen amid a "huge" drop in humanitarian aid funding, the UN children's agency warned Friday. The stark prediction comes in a new UNICEF report, "Yemen five years on: Children, conflict and COVID-19." It said the number of malnourished Yemeni children could reach 2.4 million by the end of the year, a 20 per cent increase in the current figure.

<https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/millions-of-yemeni-children-may-starve-amid-pandemic-unicef-warns-1.8950206>

### **Scientific Viewpoint**

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#### **Some COVID-19 patients aren't getting better. Major medical centers are trying to figure out how to help.**

She was diagnosed with COVID-19 in April, about a month after her symptoms — cough, congestion and extreme fatigue — began. Now, those symptoms have evolved into weeks of low-grade fever and a burning sensation under her skin. Watson's illness was never severe enough to warrant hospitalization. Instead, her symptoms have lurked in the background, never fully resolving. Doctors have had few answers for her.

<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/some-covid-19-patients-aren-t-getting-better-major-medical-n1231281>

#### **Coronavirus Or Flu? Scientists Are Developing A Sensor Which Tests For Both**

## **Simultaneously**

In anticipation of these upcoming challenges, researchers from the University of Texas at Austin are developing a sensor which can differentiate between Covid-19 and the flu by testing a person for both simultaneously. The research is being funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation as a means to urgently roll out the project to benefit public health by the time flu season hits. The sensor, made of graphene, is tiny, about the dimensions of a micro-SD card. The researchers developed the sensor at this size so the results could be read out via laptop or cellphone.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/allisongasparini/2020/06/27/coronavirus-or-flu-scientists-are-developing-a-sensor-which-tests-for-both-simultaneously/>

## **Asymptomatic COVID-19 findings dim hopes for 'herd immunity' and 'immunity passports'**

A closer look at people who tested positive for COVID-19 but never developed symptoms has found that such asymptomatic carriers have few to no detectable antibodies just weeks after infection, suggesting they may not develop lasting immunity. There's growing evidence that a significant proportion of people who test positive for COVID-19 never show symptoms, although it's not clear what percentage of people that is and what role they play in spreading the disease. A Chinese study published this week in Nature followed 37 people in Wanzhou District in China who did not show any outward signs of the disease, despite testing positive when their respiratory tracts were swabbed and being kept in hospital for observation.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/asymptomatic-covid-19-1.5629172>

## **Failing the test: Slow start and flawed decisions in Britain's coronavirus testing have cost lives, warn health leaders**

Investigation: A fatally slow start. An opaque decision to build a new lab network. A High Court battle over 'flawed' software. And when the Health Secretary declared success in hitting his testing target, lab staff simply felt 'upset' at the blatant boost from home tests. Now this system is being expanded at a cost of billions. Insiders tell Shaun Lintern how failures have already cost lives, and why urgent improvements are needed before a second wave

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/coronavirus-testing-lighthouse-labs-nhs-deaths-delay-a9589381.html>

## **One Biohacker's Improbable Bid to Make a DIY Covid-19 Vaccine**

Josiah Zanyer is in a rush. As Covid-19 continues its march around the globe, scientists have embarked on an unprecedented campaign to develop a vaccine against the disease. There are more than 125 potential vaccines undergoing tests, with 20 in human trials. And the U.S. program, Operation Warp Speed, has set the ambitious goal of a vaccine for early 2021. But that unheard-of pace in vaccine development isn't fast enough for Zayner, a one-time NASA scientist who left mainstream science to proselytize the value of do-it-yourself home experiments.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-06-25/one-biohacker-s-improbable-bid-to-make-a-diy-covid-19-vaccine>

## **INTERVIEW: What to know about COVID-19 strains in Nigeria - Molecular Biologist**

In this interview with Chiamaka Okafor, Mr Happi, a molecular biologist and Director of the World Bank-funded African Center of Excellence for Genomics of Infectious Diseases (ACEGID) at the Redeemer's University, Ede, in Nigeria's Osun State, discusses the findings of a recent study from an advanced sequencing of the SARS-COV2 which shows that there are 3 lineages or strains of COVID-19 existing in Nigeria. This interview also explored the implications of these findings in containing the virus, as well as other speculations around the mutation of the virus. Excerpts:

<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/coronavirus/399853-interview-what-to-know-about-covid-19-strains-in-nigeria-molecular-biologist.html>

## **Brazil signs deal to produce experimental virus vaccine**

The Brazilian government announced on Saturday an agreement with Oxford University and

pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca to produce a promising coronavirus vaccine that is undergoing tests. Brazilian Health Ministry authorities said at a news conference that the country will pay \$127 million and receive material to produce 30.4 million doses in two batches in December and January, which would allow it to quickly start inoculation efforts if the vaccine is certified to be safe and effective. They said the total deal is for 100 million vaccines for a country of about 210 million residents. It will be produced by local vaccine maker Fiocruz.

<https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/wires/ap/article-8466439/Brazil-signs-deal-produce-experimental-virus-vaccine.html>

### **Key U.S. Medical Group Adds Steroids to COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines**

The group now suggests dexamethasone, or an equivalent steroid such as methylprednisolone or prednisone, for hospitalized COVID-19 patients who require supplemental oxygen, mechanical ventilation or extracorporeal mechanical oxygenation (ECMO). The IDSA does not recommend steroids for COVID-19 patients who do not require supplemental oxygen. In patients with severe COVID-19, the immune system can overreact, triggering a potentially harmful cascade. Steroids are an older class of drugs used to suppress that inflammatory response, but they can also make it easier for other infections to take hold - and doctors are leery of their use in a hospital setting, or in patients in earlier stages of the illness when they body's immune response needs to be on high alert.

<https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2020/06/26/us/26reuters-health-coronavirus-guidelines-steroids.html>

### **South Korea Backs Remdesivir for COVID-19, Urges Caution With Dexamethasone**

South Korea has added Gilead's anti-viral drug remdesivir to its coronavirus treatment guidelines in its first revision of recommendations since the outbreak began and urged caution in the use of the steroid therapy dexamethasone. South Korea, widely praised around the world for its handling of the pandemic without a full lockdown, has reported 12,602 coronavirus cases as of Thursday midnight, with 282 deaths. Remdesivir is designed to hinder certain viruses, including the new coronavirus, from making copies of themselves and potentially overwhelming the body's immune system. The drug previously failed trials as an Ebola treatment. South Korea's updated guidelines come after a study showed that the cheap and widely used dexamethasone reduced deaths in very sick COVID-19 patients. They advised doctors to take caution until a full study is published.

<https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2020/06/26/world/asia/26reuters-health-coronavirus-southkorea.html>

### **Coronavirus traces found in March 2019 sewage sample, Spanish study shows**

Spanish virologists have found traces of the novel coronavirus in a sample of Barcelona waste water collected in March 2019, nine months before the COVID-19 disease was identified in China, the University of Barcelona said on Friday. The discovery of virus genome presence so early in Spain, if confirmed, would imply the disease may have appeared much earlier than the scientific community thought. The University of Barcelona team, who had been testing waste water since mid-April this year to identify potential new outbreaks, decided to also run tests on older samples. They first found the virus was present in Barcelona on Jan. 15, 2020, 41 days before the first case was officially reported there. Then they ran tests on samples taken between January 2018 and December 2019 and found the presence of the virus genome in one of them, collected on March 12, 2019.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-spain-science/coronavirus-traces-found-in-march-2019-sewage-sample-spanish-study-shows-idUKKBN23X2HQ>

### **Scientists just beginning to understand the many health problems caused by COVID-19**

Scientists are only starting to grasp the vast array of health problems caused by the novel coronavirus, some of which may have lingering effects on patients and health systems for years to come, according to doctors and infectious disease experts. Besides the respiratory issues that leave patients gasping for breath, the virus that causes COVID-19 attacks many organ systems, in some cases causing catastrophic damage. "We thought this was only a respiratory virus. Turns out, it goes

after the pancreas. It goes after the heart. It goes after the liver, the brain, the kidney and other organs. We didn't appreciate that in the beginning," said Dr. Eric Topol, a cardiologist and director of the Scripps Research Translational Institute in La Jolla, California. In addition to respiratory distress, patients with COVID-19 can experience blood clotting disorders that can lead to strokes, and extreme inflammation that attacks multiple organ systems. The virus can also cause neurological complications that range from headache, dizziness and loss of taste or smell to seizures and confusion.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-effects/scientists-just-beginning-to-understand-the-many-health-problems-caused-by-covid-19-idUSKBN23X1BZ>

### **Gilead's remdesivir endorsed as first COVID-19 treatment in Europe**

Doctors in Europe will soon be able to treat COVID-19 patients with Gilead's antiviral drug, remdesivir, after the healthcare regulator's endorsement put it on track to become the first therapy for the disease on the continent

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-gilead-europe-idUSKBN23W1ZH>

### **Brazil university in talks to test Italian coronavirus vaccine**

"We are already in advanced discussions with Italy's Lazzaro Spallanzani National Institute," Unifesp President Soraya Smaili said in an interview on Wednesday. "We expect to bring it here, the accord is already moving forward and we'll be able to do a lot of studies with this vaccine." The Italian researchers want to conduct midstage trials and final Phase III studies involving thousands of subjects in Brazil, Smaili said. Francesco Vaia, the chief medical officer at Lazzaro Spallanzani, said the institute had agreed to do Phase II and III trials in Sao Paulo, once it completes the first phase which is expected to start in Italy in the first half of July. The candidate vaccine is produced by Italy's ReiThera, he said. Over the weekend, Unifesp began clinical trials of a vaccine developed by Oxford University with support from AstraZeneca Plc. Brazil's government is nearing an agreement to eventually produce that vaccine.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-brazil-vaccine/brazil-university-in-talks-to-test-italian-coronavirus-vaccine-idUKKBN23X1TN>

### **Astrazeneca, Moderna most advanced in COVID-19 vaccine race ...**

Astrazeneca's COVID-19 vaccine candidate is probably the world's leading candidate and most advanced in terms of development, the World Health Organization's chief scientist said on Friday. Soumya Swaminathan said that Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine candidate was also "not far behind" Astrazeneca's, among more than 200 candidates, 15 of which have entered clinical trials. The WHO is in talks with multiple Chinese manufacturers, including Sinovac, on potential vaccines, she said. Swaminathan, speaking to a news briefing, called for considering collaborating on COVID-19 vaccine trials, similar to the WHO's ongoing Solidarity trial for drugs.

<https://news.trust.org/item/20200626124938-bzwyg/>

### **A Horrifying U.S. Covid Curve Has a Simple Explanation**

Declaring victory too close to the top of the curve appears to be an excellent way to return to new heights. The gap with Europe argues for more restraint from fast-opening states going forward, and in fact, some governors are taking the cue. In Texas, where cases are rising at a dangerous rate, Republican Governor Greg Abbott has called a halt to business reopenings and ordered taverns closed. North Carolina has also frozen its reopening efforts, as have Utah and Nevada. And of course there is the example of New York and New Jersey, both of which waited until their steep curves were tamed before starting reopening efforts; now, even as activities resume in both states, new cases have slowed to a trickle.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-06-26/coronavirus-a-horrifying-rise-in-u-s-covid-cases-is-explained>

### **Severe COVID-19 can damage the brain, preliminary study ...**

A preliminary study of patients hospitalised with COVID-19 has found the disease can damage the brain, causing complications such as stroke, inflammation, psychosis and dementia-like symptoms in some severe cases. The findings are the first detailed look at a range of neurological complications of COVID-19, the researchers said, and underline a need for larger studies to find the mechanisms behind them and assist the search for treatments. "This (is) an important snapshot of the brain-related complications of COVID-19 in hospitalised patients. It is critically important that we continue to collect this information to really understand this virus fully," said Sarah Pett, a University College London professor who co-led the work. The study, published in the Lancet Psychiatry journal on Thursday, looked in detail at 125 cases from across the UK. Co-lead researcher Benedict Michael, from Liverpool University, said it was important to note that it focused on severe cases.

<https://news.trust.org/item/20200625214519-dg2oh/>

### **Why strange and debilitating coronavirus symptoms can last for months**

From extreme fatigue to weight loss, numbness, breathing difficulties and chest pain, some people's covid-19 symptoms are proving very hard to shake

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg24632881-400-why-strange-and-debilitating-coronavirus-symptoms-can-last-for-months/>

## **Coronavirus Resurgence**

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### **UK considers locking down Leicester after COVID-19 spike - Sunday Times**

The British government is considering imposing a lockdown in the city of Leicester after a surge of coronavirus cases there, the Sunday Times newspaper reported, citing senior government sources. Health Secretary Matt Hancock is examining a legislation required for the shutdown after it was disclosed that Leicester, a city of around 350,000 people in the East Midlands, has had over 650 COVID-19 cases in the fortnight to June 16, the newspaper reported. Hancock is considering "all options", including imposing a localised lockdown, according to the report

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-leicester/uk-considers-locking-down-leicester-after-covid-19-spike-sunday-times-idUKKBN23Z02J>

### **Czech Republic's daily number of new coronavirus highest since April 8**

The daily number of new coronavirus cases in the Czech Republic jumped to 260, the highest since April 8, Health Ministry data showed on Sunday. That is nearly triple that of the 93 recorded on Thursday. In total, the country of 10.7 million has confirmed 11,298 cases of the COVID-19 illness, with 347 deaths as of the end of Saturday. Chief public health officer, Jarmila Razova, told public Czech Radio on Saturday that the rise could be linked to intensive testing in local hotbeds of the infection.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-czech/czech-republics-daily-number-of-new-coronavirus-highest-since-april-8-idUKKBN23Z06G?il=0>

### **China sees uptick in new COVID-19 cases, including 17 in Beijing**

Mainland China reported on Saturday the highest number of new coronavirus cases in four days, driven by a COVID-19 resurgence in the Chinese capital of Beijing. The National Health Commission reported 21 new confirmed infections in mainland China on Friday, up from 13 a day earlier and the highest since Monday. In Beijing, 17 new confirmed cases were reported, up from 11 a day earlier and the most since June 20. Since June 11 when Beijing reported its first case in the current outbreak, stemming from a sprawling wholesale food centre in the southwest of the capital, 297 people in the city of more than 20 million have contracted the virus. Mainland China reported four new so-called imported cases on Friday, infections linked to travellers arriving from abroad. That compares with two cases a day earlier.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-china-cases/china-sees-uptick-in-new-covid-19-cases-including-17-in-beijing-idUSKBN23Y01M>

## **U.S. sets another single-day record for new coronavirus cases, surpassing 40,000 for first time**

The United States set a record for new covid-19 cases for the third time in three days, passing the 40,000 mark for the first time, according to tracking by The Washington Post. Thirteen states set their own records for the average number of new cases reported over the past seven days: Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Idaho, Washington and Utah. Six states set new single-day highs, led by Florida with 8,942 cases, more than 60 percent higher than its previous high set on Wednesday. Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, Idaho and Utah also set new single-day records. Florida announced Friday morning that bars must close immediately, a move echoed by Texas, a state also dealing with a surge in cases and nearing its capacity to care for those suffering. Both states are backtracking amid a crisis of rising hospitalizations and skyrocketing infection rates.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/06/26/coronavirus-live-updates-us/>