

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 12th Apr 2021

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### Overnight NewsRoundUp

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#### **COVID-19: A disaster five years in the making**

- Dr Peter Hotez, professor of paediatrics and molecular virology and microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine, [argues the problems we are facing in the COVID-19 pandemic are not a one-off extraordinary event but the culmination of a five year unravelling of progress](#) in global public health.
- A new variant, B.1.617 is behind the sudden increase of COVID-19 cases in Maharashtra, India. It spreads faster and contains an L452R mutation '[capable of immune escape, dodging antibodies \(and T cells\) generated by prior infection or a dose of vaccine](#)'
- Scientists in Brazil have discovered a new variant of coronavirus that combines 18 mutations, rubbing salt in the wound of the country. [Virologist Renato Santana from the Federal University of Minas Gerais told local daily G1 that 'It is as if these variants were evolving,' adding that the new variant includes the same genes modified by Brazil's Manaus variant, known as P1, British and South African variants.](#) Noting that it is too early to assess whether the new strain is more transmissible or deadly, he said that it has mutations in common with variants that are already associated with a higher risk of death.
- China is considering mixing its COVID-19 vaccines as a way of boosting their efficacy, the country's top disease control official has said. [Available data shows Chinese vaccines lag behind others; including Pfizer and Moderna, in terms of efficacy, but have less onerous storage requirements.](#) Hungary, Serbia, Turkey and Brazil are among the countries using vaccines from China, including jabs made by Sinovac a private company, and state owned Sinopharm. Sinovac efficacy was found to be as low as 50.4% by researchers in Brazil, near the 50% threshold at which experts say a vaccine must reach to be useful.
- The official Russian coronavirus death toll of 102,649 on Saturday - reported on state television and to the WHO - is far lower, when adjusted for population, than that of the United States and most of Western Europe. [However, a far different story is told by the official stats agency Rosstat, which tallies death from all causes.](#) Russia saw a jump of 360,000 deaths above normal from last April through to December, according to a New York Times analysis of historical data. Rosstat figures for January and February of this year show that the number is now well above 400,000.

#### **Covid-19: a disaster five years in the making**

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##### **Covid-19: a disaster five years in the making**

The covid-19 pandemic is not a one-off extraordinary event but the culmination of a five year unravelling of progress in global health, writes Peter Hotez. We live in extraordinary times in global health. Through two decades of the United Nations' millennium and sustainable development goals, the number of childhood deaths from measles and some other vaccine preventable infections has fallen by as much as 87%.<sup>1</sup> The launch and support of global vaccination programmes through Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and mass treatment programmes for HIV-AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases have produced enormous global health gains.<sup>1</sup> We are also moving towards the elimination of neglected tropical diseases including onchocerciasis, lymphatic filariasis, scabies, yaws, and trachoma, with major falls in the incidence of AIDS in Africa and elsewhere. The benefits of these successes go beyond public health to reduced poverty through improvements in

productivity, child development, and maternal-fetal outcomes. Global security has also been strengthened. Over the past 5-6 years, however, we have seen abrupt reversals in these developments leading to the emergence or re-emergence of both vaccine preventable diseases and neglected infections in multiple areas of the world. And that's before the onset of covid-19. Humanity is able to make tremendous gains against global disease like never before—but we have allowed those gains to unravel. The novel coronavirus has shown us the consequences of this.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/373/bmj.n657>

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### **The Novel Coronavirus Variants and India's Uncertain Future**

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<https://science.thewire.in/health/sars-cov-2-variants-b117-b1617-india-second-wave-uncertain-future/>

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### **Brazil finds new virus variant combining 18 mutations**

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Scientists in Brazil have discovered a new variant of coronavirus that combines 18 mutations, rubbing salt in the wound of the South American epicenter. The new strain from Belo Horizonte city "has characteristics in common with the variants that were already circulating in Brazil but it also has new characteristics," Virologist Renato Santana from the Federal University of Minas Gerais told local daily G1 on Wednesday. "It is as if these variants were evolving," Santana said, adding the new variant includes the same genes modified by Brazil's Manaus, known as P1, British and South African variant. Noting that it is early to assess whether the new strain more transmissible or deadly, he said that it has mutations in common with variants that are already associated with a higher risk of death. The new super variant made headlines at a critical time when Brazil registered record-high single-day COVID-19 deaths with more than 4,000.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/americas/brazil-finds-new-virus-variant-combining-18-mutations/2201998>

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### **China considers mixing its Covid-19 vaccines to make them more effective**

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China is considering mixing its COVID-19 vaccines as a way of boosting their efficacy, the country's top disease control official has said. Available data shows Chinese vaccines lag behind others including Pfizer and Moderna in terms of efficacy, but have less onerous storage requirements. Hungary, Serbia, Turkey and Brazil are among the countries using vaccines from China, including jabs made by Sinovac, a private company, and state-owned Sinopharm. Sinovac efficacy was found to be as low as 50.4% by researchers in Brazil, near the 50% threshold at which health experts say a vaccine is useful. By comparison, the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has been found to be 97% effective.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/china-vaccines-mix-sinopharm-b1829891.html>

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### **'You Can't Trust Anyone': Russia's Hidden Covid Toll Is an Open Secret**

#### **'You Can't Trust Anyone': Russia's Hidden Covid Toll Is an Open Secret**

The country's official coronavirus death toll is 102,649. But at least 300,000 more people died last year during the pandemic than were reported in Russia's most widely cited official statistics.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/10/world/europe/covid-russia-death.html>

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### **U.S. has administered 183.5 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, CDC says**

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The United States had administered 183,467,709 doses of COVID-19 vaccines and distributed 237,791,735 doses as of Saturday morning, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

said. Those figures are up from the 178,837,781 doses the CDC said had been administered by April 9, out of 233,591,955 doses delivered. The agency said 117,142,879 people had received at least one dose, while 70,692,645 people had been fully vaccinated as of Saturday. The CDC tally includes the two-dose Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines as well as Johnson & Johnson's one-shot vaccine as of 6 a.m. EDT on Saturday.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-usa-cdc/us-has-administered-1835-million-doses-of-covid-19-vaccines-cdc-says-idUSKBN2BY026>

### **COVID-19: Record number of people fully vaccinated against coronavirus in UK in latest 24-hour period**

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A record number of people in the UK had their second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine on Thursday, government figures show. Some 449,269 received their second jab, meaning 6,541,174 have now been fully vaccinated against coronavirus. The previous high was 1 April, when 445,416 were given their second shot. The figures also show 96,242 people had their first dose yesterday - one of the lowest tallies since data started being released in early January.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-record-number-of-people-fully-vaccinated-in-uk-in-latest-24-hour-period-12270637>

### **Indian states report vaccine shortages amid record COVID surge**

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As India continues to reel under a second - and more vicious - wave of coronavirus with an average of more than 90,000 cases being reported since April 1, a shortage of vaccines has added to the crisis. From under 15,000 cases a day at the beginning of March, India on Friday reported its all-time high of 131,968 new COVID-19 cases - a record increase for a third straight day - pushing the country's total infection tally to more than 13 million.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/4/9/india-suffers-vaccine-shortages-amid-record-surge-in-covid-cases>

### **Global groups grapple with stretched COVID vaccine supply**

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A complex picture of increased vaccine demand in the face of increased activity from SARS-CoV-2 variants is prompting global health groups to search for ways to keep production flowing and add more doses. Meanwhile, regulatory groups are looking into rare reports of bleeding problems in people who receive the AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine and whether blood clots might also be linked to the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. And surges rose to new record levels in a number of hotspot countries, including Argentina, Brazil, India, and Turkey.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/04/global-groups-grapple-stretched-covid-vaccine-supply>

### **Unwanted vaccines needed to help poor countries catch up, international health officials say**

Doses of vaccines rejected as countries fine-tune their inoculation campaigns will go to poor countries where possible to counter a "shocking imbalance" in distribution, international health officials said on Friday. Authorities in Australia and Greece became the latest to recommend alternatives to the AstraZeneca vaccine for younger people over fears of possible very rare blood clots, while Hong Kong delayed deliveries. The city said it had enough alternatives and did not want to waste these shots while global supplies were short. Australia's decision effectively put paid to plans to have its population vaccinated by the end of October, highlighting the delicate public health balancing act the issue has created.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-astrazeneca/unwanted-vaccines-needed-to-help-poor-countries-catch-up-international-health-officials-say-idUSKBN2BW1M1>

### **A fair shot: World Bank, WHO urge unity in global vaccine efforts**

Financing, transparency in vaccine development, political will and global solidarity will all be essential in ensuring the world's poorest countries gain access to coronavirus vaccines, officials from several major international organisations stressed at a World Bank forum on Friday. "Where there are gaps, we must move quickly to fill them," David Malpass, the president of the World Bank Group, said during the virtual panel discussion. "It's critical to get economies growing faster and to keep more families from falling into poverty."

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2021/4/9/fair-shot-world-bank-who-chiefs-urge-unity-in-vaccine-effort>

### **Stalled at first job: Vaccine shortages hit poor countries**

As many as 60 countries, including some of the world's poorest, might be stalled at the first shots of their coronavirus vaccinations because nearly all deliveries through the global program intended to help them are blocked until as late as June. COVAX, the global initiative to provide vaccines to countries lacking the clout to negotiate for scarce supplies on their own, has in the past week shipped more than 25,000 doses to low-income countries only twice on any given day. Deliveries have all but halted since Monday. During the past two weeks, according to data compiled daily by UNICEF fewer than 2 million COVAX doses in total were cleared for shipment to 92 countries in the developing world — the same amount injected in Britain alone. On Friday, the head of the World Health Organization slammed the "shocking imbalance" in global COVID-19 vaccination. WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that while one in four people in rich countries had received a vaccine, only one in 500 people in poorer countries had gotten a dose.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/stalled-at-first-jab-vaccine-shortages-hit-poor-countries-world-health-organization-who-london-india-britain-b1829449.html>

### **Moderna vice president: "Over four million vaccine doses for Italy by June"**

Dan Staner, number two of American biotech and responsible for Europe. "The United States started production earlier and has a lead of about three months. But we are increasing the doses manufactured in Europe." Variant tests are already underway. And for the future, work is being done on an AIDS vaccine

[https://rep.repubblica.it/pwa/intervista/2021/04/09/news/il\\_vicepresidente\\_di\\_moderna\\_oltre\\_quattro\\_milioni\\_di\\_dosi\\_di\\_vaccino\\_per\\_l\\_italia\\_entro\\_giugno\\_-295748451/](https://rep.repubblica.it/pwa/intervista/2021/04/09/news/il_vicepresidente_di_moderna_oltre_quattro_milioni_di_dosi_di_vaccino_per_l_italia_entro_giugno_-295748451/)

### **'Covid-19 jab messaging damaging confidence in Africa'**

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#### **'Covid-19 jab messaging damaging confidence in Africa'**

The mixed messaging over the AstraZenca coronavirus jab is affecting vaccine confidence in low and middle income countries, the co-chair of the African Union's Africa Vaccine Delivery Alliance for Covid-19 has said. Dr Ayoade Alakija told BBC World News that the vaccine is being rolled out to over two billion people and is often the only option available. But countries with large populations of under 30s will question why they are being asked to take it when other countries like the UK are offering alternatives for that age group, Dr Alakija said.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-56678379>

### **Airlines warn the cost of Covid tests will stop people going abroad**

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Airlines have called for the competition watchdog to investigate the price of Covid tests for travel, with the travel industry warning that the PCR tests required by government will in effect block most international holidays this year. Global airline body Iata called on the UK Competition and Markets Authority to launch an inquiry, as separate research showed that travelers had to pay twice as much for PCR tests in the UK as they do in much of Europe. The report from the government's 'global travel taskforce' published on Friday said travel could be opened up from 17 May but that individuals would require three PCR tests to holiday even in the safest, "green-light" states - leading to

immediate warnings that the cost would prohibit most people from going abroad.

<https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2021/apr/09/airlines-warn-that-the-cost-of-covid-tests-will-stop-people-going-abroad>

## **COVID-19 Pandemic Unwelcome KnockOn Effects**

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### **Women report more side effects from the COVID-19 vaccine than men. Health experts explain why.**

Reports of COVID-19 vaccine side effects support what many have anecdotally observed: women shoulder the bigger burden. Among nearly 7,000 reports processed through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) from Dec. 14 to Jan. 13, more than 79% of them came from women. The most frequently reported side effects were headache, fatigue and dizziness. Women also are more likely than men to experience some of the vaccine's more unusual side effects, such as an itchy red rash that appears at the injection site commonly known as COVID arm or Moderna arm, as about 95% of the reactions occur with the Moderna vaccine. Overall, women account for 77% of the Moderna vaccine's reported side effects.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/medical/women-report-more-side-effects-from-the-covid-19-vaccine-than-men-health-experts-explain-why/ar-BB1fvmwD>

### **Pandemic, hunger force thousands into sex work in Mexico**

Hardships caused by the coronavirus pandemic have forced former sex workers in Mexico back into the trade years after they left, made it more dangerous and reduced some to having sex in cars or on sidewalks for lack of available hotels. Claudia, who like most of the sex workers interviewed asked to be identified only by her first name, had stopped working the streets a decade ago after she married one of her former clients. But when her husband lost his job early in the pandemic, the couple fell four months behind on rent for their apartment. The only solution Claudia saw was to go back to working the streets.

<https://apnews.com/article/pandemics-global-trade-mexico-coronavirus-pandemic-caribbean-69ed9611a08b8973e59841c7120cc9e8>

### **Exclusive-U.S. considering cash payments to Central America to stem migration**

The United States is considering a conditional cash transfer program to help address economic woes that lead migrants from certain Central American countries to trek north, as well as sending COVID-19 vaccines to those countries, a senior White House official told Reuters on Friday.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-immigration-border-exclusive-idUSKBN2BW2L1>

### **Reports detail high COVID-19 burden in Native Americans**

During the pandemic, Native Americans have had 2.2 times greater COVID-19 case incidence and almost quadruple the death rate of White people in Montana, according to a study today in Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR). A separate MMWR report looked at COVID-19 cases and response on a 10,000-member tribal reservation in Montana, while a third detailed control efforts taken on a North Dakota reservation. All three research teams suggest that Native American populations are disproportionately vulnerable during the pandemic and benefit from COVID-19 mitigations.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/04/reports-detail-high-covid-19-burden-native-americans>

### **COVID-19: Study finds link with brain, mental health conditions**

A study suggests that in the United States in 2020, around a third of COVID-19 survivors were diagnosed with a neurological or mental health condition within 6 months of their COVID-19 diagnoses. Anxiety and mood disorders were the most common diagnoses. Neurological conditions, such as stroke and dementia, occurred less often but were more common among people with severe COVID-19. The overall effect of these disorders, many of which are chronic, may be substantial for

health and social care systems due to the scale of the pandemic.

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/covid-19-1-in-3-diagnosed-with-brain-or-mental-health-condition>

## **Ongoing Vaccine Hesitancy**

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### **40 percent of Marines have declined the coronavirus vaccine**

Forty percent of Marines are declining the coronavirus vaccine, according to data obtained by CNN. There has been a 38.9 percent decline rate, but the Marines are providing information to individuals to encourage them to get the vaccine. "The Navy and Marine Corps are providing substantial educational information broadly, and working with commands to ensure Marines, Sailors, and beneficiaries have accurate information regarding the safety and efficacy of the vaccines to encourage individuals to get immunized," Capt. Andrew Wood, a Marines spokesman, told The Hill in a statement.

<https://thehill.com/policy/national-security/547534-40-percent-of-marines-have-declined-the-coronavirus-vaccine>

## **Vaccine Outbreak Clusters**

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### **Canada ski resort linked to largest outbreak of P1 Covid variant outside Brazil**

For ski resorts, spring normally marks a final chance for visitors to carve sun-drenched runs before the season ends. But at Canada's most famous ski resort, the gondolas have stopped, and the slopes are eerily quiet. The Whistler Blackcomb ski resort was shut down by provincial authorities at the end of March after they realised that P1, the highly infectious coronavirus variant traced back to Brazil, was spreading rapidly throughout the community. As provinces across Canada break records for new cases of the virus, experts have grown increasingly troubled by the rapid and covert spread of variants. With 877 confirmed cases of P1, the province of British Columbia is now the centre of the world's largest sequenced outbreak of the variant outside Brazil - and nearly a quarter of those cases have been linked to Whistler.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/11/canada-ski-resort-p1-covid-variant-whistler>

## **New Outbreaks of Concern**

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### **Brazil Coronavirus outbreak now a 'raging inferno' amid 4,000 daily deaths, warns WHO**

Brazil's Covid-19 outbreak has turned into a "raging inferno" as this week saw daily records of 4,000 deaths, the World Health Organization has said. The number of deaths caused by Covid-19 has now reached over 345,000, second only to the United States, where 561,000 deaths were recorded. President Jair Bolsonaro's handling of the Covid-19 - which he previously branded a "little flu" - is now due to be probed amid concerns he failed to introduce adequate measures to stop the outbreak in the South American country. "What you are dealing with here is a raging inferno of an outbreak," said Bruce Aylward, senior adviser to the director general of the World Health Organization, in a public briefing

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/brazil-coronavirus-outbreak-now-raging-23892001>

### **Delhi records 7,897 fresh Covid-19 cases, positivity rate shoots up**

The Covid-19 cases in Delhi fell below the 8000-mark on Saturday as testing dipped, which means fewer people were tested as opposed to those a day before. Delhi on Saturday recorded 7897 cases of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19), pushing the Capital's cumulative tally to 714,423, according to a health bulletin. The fatalities also rose sharply in the last 24 hours after 39 new deaths were recorded, the bulletin added. A total of 11,235 people have succumbed to the deadly viral infection since the pandemic began last year.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/delhi-news/delhi-records-7-897-fresh-covid-19-cases-positivity-rate-shoots-up-101618061476378.html>

### **Thailand faces growing outbreak ahead of New Year travel**

Thai authorities struggled to contain a growing coronavirus outbreak just days before the country's

traditional Songkran New Year's holiday, when millions of people travel. Health officials reported 559 new infections on Friday, following increases over the previous two days. The government response has so far centered on closures of nightlife venues in 41 provinces for two weeks. Governors of some provinces are placing restrictions on travelers arriving from elsewhere. Such daily increases are rare for Thailand, which has weathered the pandemic far better than many nations through measures including strict border controls that have decimated the country's lucrative tourism industry. Thailand has also experimented at times with curfews, alcohol bans and closures of schools, shopping malls and restaurants.

<https://apnews.com/article/travel-pandemics-coronavirus-pandemic-holidays-bangkok-062e0fbaff162cfc3a9e65cbc668b584>

### **Biden to rush vaccinators to Michigan as gov urges limits**

Washington will rush federal resources to support vaccinations, testing and treatments, but not vaccines, to Michigan in an effort to control the state's worst-in-the-nation COVID-19 outbreak, the White House said Friday. The announcement came as Gov. Gretchen Whitmer strongly recommended, but did not order, a two-week pause on face-to-face high school instruction, indoor restaurant dining and youth sports. She cited more contagious coronavirus variants and pandemic fatigue as factors in the surge, which has led some hospitals to postpone non-emergency procedures.

<https://apnews.com/040480cd6860324a9fa0890ec373a0d6>

### **Italy eases COVID-19 curbs as infections decline, but deaths still high**

Lockdown measures will be eased from Monday in six Italian regions, the health ministry ruled on Friday, even as the nationwide daily death toll remains well above 400.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-italy-curbs/italy-eases-covid-19-curbs-as-infections-decline-but-deaths-still-high-idUSL8N2M23S0>

### **Iran orders 10-day shutdown amid fourth wave of coronavirus pandemic**

Iran imposed a 10-day lockdown across most of the country on Saturday to curb the spread of a fourth wave of the coronavirus pandemic, state media reported. The lockdown affects 23 of the country's 31 provinces, health ministry spokesman Alireza Raisi said. Businesses, schools, theatres and sports facilities have been forced to shut and gatherings are banned during the holy fasting month of Ramadan that begins on Wednesday. Iran's coronavirus cases have surpassed 2 million with a new daily average of over 20,000 infections over the past week, according to the health ministry. It has reported more than 64,000 fatalities. "Unfortunately, today we have entered a fourth wave," President Hassan Rouhani said in televised remarks. He blamed the surge foremost on the variant that first emerged in the UK which spread to Iran earlier this year from neighbouring Iraq.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-iran-int-idUSKBN2BX090>

### **Top German health official says lockdown of two to four weeks is needed**

A lockdown lasting two to four weeks is necessary in order to break a third wave of the coronavirus, Germany's top public health official said on Friday. Lothar Wieler, president of the Robert Koch Institute, said projections showed that mobility needed to be massively reduced in order to stop infections rising. "Every day in which we don't act, we lose lives," he told a weekly news conference.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-germany-lockdown-idUSKBN2BW14F>