

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

3rd Jun 2021

Overnight News RoundUp

Help vaccinate the world or variants will come back to 'bite us' - expert

- The UK could be slammed by new coronavirus variants unless more is done to help poorer nations vaccinate their populations, an expert has warned.
- [Although vaccines have been effective against the Delta variant first identified in India, protection against future variants is 'not guaranteed forever,' Professor Sir John Bell said.](#)
- As the disease rages in other parts of the world, new variants could emerge which will come back to 'bite us,' the regius professor of medicine at Oxford University warned.
- He said that if the UK scampers down a rabbit hole every time a new variant emerges the nation will be 'huddled away' for a long time.
- The comments came as academics debate whether the final easing of restrictions should proceed on June 21. Sir John told BBC Radio 4's Today programme that current figures 'don't look too intimidating' but they still need to play out for a couple of weeks before the government makes its final decision on the June 21 reopening.
- 'We do need to keep an eye on our hospitalisations, serious disease and death, which is really what we're trying to manage,' he said.
- 'If we scamper down a rabbit hole every time we see a new variant, we're going to spend a long time huddled away, so I think we do need to get a bit of balance in the discussion and keep our eyes on the serious disease that we're trying to prevent.
- 'This disease is here to stay, probably forever, but we do need to move on and try and make sure we suppress the disease as much as possible around the world because otherwise we're just going to sit here and get slammed by repeated variants that come in the door.'
- Sir John said there will be 10 billion vaccines created before Christmas, but many have been pledged to richer countries who have acquired much more than needed for their populations.
- **The COVAX global vaccine-sharing facility 'doesn't need money, they need vaccines,'** he added.

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The UK could be "slammed" by new coronavirus variants unless more is done to help poorer nations vaccinate their populations, an expert has warned. Although vaccines have been effective against the Delta variant first identified in India protection against future variants is "not guaranteed forever", Professor Sir John Bell said. As the disease rages in other parts of the world, new variants could emerge which will come back to "bite us", the regius professor of medicine at Oxford University warned. He said that if the UK "scampers down the rabbit hole" every time a new variant emerges the nation will be "huddled away" for a long time.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/help-government-india-delta-bbc-radio-b938376.html>

Japan's hosting of Olympics amid COVID pandemic 'not normal'

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Hosting the Olympics during the current state of coronavirus infections in Japan was "not normal", Japan's most senior medical adviser has said in one of the strongest warnings yet about risks from

the troubled Games. Doctors have said the Olympics, due to start on July 23 after a postponement from last year, would strain a healthcare system already seeing record numbers in critical conditions.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/sports/2021/6/2/japans-hosting-of-olympics-in-pandemic-not-normal-adviser-says>

COVID: Thousands of Indian children orphaned by pandemic

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The COVID-19 pandemic, which has devastated families across India, has left thousands of children orphaned or without one parent. Since the start of the pandemic, more than 1,700 children have lost both parents, while 140 have been abandoned and more than 7,400 have lost one of their parents to the virus, according to the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR). The NCPCR submitted the report to the Supreme Court on Monday, detailing the problems of children orphaned during the pandemic and the need to provide them with food, shelter and clothing. The northern state of Uttar Pradesh reported 2,110 children who were orphaned, lost one parent or were abandoned, followed by Bihar at 1,327 and Kerala at 952, according to government data. Child rights activists believe that this number is likely a significant underestimate. In response, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government last week announced measures to help orphaned children, with around 1 million rupees (€11,220, \$13,700) set aside to be given to each child as a stipend, from the ages of 18 to 23. The funds would be offered from the PM-CARES scheme.

<https://www.dw.com/en/covid-thousands-of-indian-children-orphaned-by-pandemic/a-57742069>

Amazon starts testing UK staff for coronavirus variants

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Amazon is testing its front-line staff in Britain for coronavirus variants and feeding the data to public health officials, including in hotspots where a strain first found in India is spreading fast. The retail giant opened COVID-19 testing labs in the UK and the United States last year to provide voluntary testing for staff and can now also test for variants in Britain, where scientists have pioneered sequencing coronavirus genomes. Aided by a rapid vaccine rollout, Britain is on the verge of reopening its economy after months of lockdowns but the Delta variant first found in India has spread, including in areas where Amazon has its lab and some fulfilment centres.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/exclusive-amazon-starts-testing-uk-staff-coronavirus-variants-2021-06-02/>

U.S. global vaccine distribution plan could be announced Thursday -Blinken

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U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Wednesday that President Joe Biden could announce as early as Thursday details of Washington's plan for distributing 80 million doses of coronavirus vaccine globally. "I want you to know as well that in a few short days ... possibly as early as tomorrow, the president is going to announce in more detail the plan that he's put together to push out 80 million vaccines around the world," said Blinken at a gathering at the U.S. Embassy in Costa Rica. Blinken reiterated that the U.S. distribution plan would be coordinated with the COVAX vaccine sharing facility and based on need "without any political strings attached."

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/us-global-vaccine-distribution-plan-could-be-announced-thursday-blinken-2021-06-02/>

Recession and violence among COVID side effects in Africa, report finds

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Much of Africa may have been spared the death toll that COVID-19 brought to other regions, but it now faces recession, growing violence and higher unemployment because of the pandemic, a report said on Wednesday. "The global economic shutdown has driven Africa into recession for the first time in 30 years, with severe repercussions for unemployment, poverty, inequalities and food

insecurity," said the 2021 Ibrahim Forum Report. It was released ahead of the annual conference this weekend of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, which promotes good governance in Africa.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/recession-violence-among-covid-side-effects-africa-report-finds-2021-06-02/>

Brazil registers almost 100000 new COVID-19 cases on Wednesday

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Brazil registered 2,507 COVID-19 deaths on Wednesday and 95,601 additional cases, according to data released by the nation's Health Ministry. The South American country has now registered 467,706 total coronavirus deaths and 16,720,081 total confirmed cases.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/brazil-registers-almost-100000-new-covid-19-cases-wednesday-2021-05-31/>

'A fantastic success': Vaccines have broken link between Covid infections and hospitalisations, says NHS chief

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Britain's world-leading vaccine roll-out has "broken the link" between Covid-19 infections and deaths, an NHS chief has said. Chris Hopson, chief executive of NHS Providers, stressed that many coronavirus patients needing hospital treatment were now younger so did not need critical care. He told ITV's Good Morning Britain: "It's all down to vaccines and it's a fantastic success story. "The NHS has been delighted to play a part, linking up with the scientists who developed the vaccines, and then ensuring that we get millions of those vaccinations into everybody's arms."

https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/covid-vaccine-link-cases-and-hospitalisations-nhs-providers-b938337.html?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1622614468-1

Free beer, other new incentives for Biden's 'vaccine sprint'

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Dangling everything from sports tickets to a free beer, President Joe Biden is looking for that extra something — anything — that will get people to roll up their sleeves for COVID-19 shots when the promise of a life-saving vaccine by itself hasn't been enough. Biden on Wednesday announced a "month of action" to urge more Americans to get vaccinated before the July 4 holiday, including an early summer sprint of incentives and a slew of new steps to ease barriers and make getting shots more appealing to those who haven't received them. He is closing in on his goal of getting 70% of adults at least partially vaccinated by Independence Day — essential to his aim of returning the nation to something approaching a pre-pandemic sense of normalcy this summer.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-business-government-and-politics-health-8168ae1c68ca955b620082d862c911ad>

Biden announces month-long COVID-19 vaccine push

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Today President Joe Biden announced a month-long vaccine push aimed at Americans under the age of 40 in an effort to vaccinate 70% of American adults with at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine by Jul 4. "If you get a shot this week you can be fully vaccinated by July 4, and celebrate independence from the virus," Biden said today during a news conference. "We need everyone to pull together to get us over the finish line." Getting to the finish line will protect Americans from another wave of illness and death in the fall, Biden said, while announcing five initiatives the federal government is taking in June to increase vaccine uptake amount young Americans and minorities. Among the initiatives is "Shots in Shops," which will turn barber and beauty shops in predominantly Black neighborhoods into vaccine sites.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/06/biden-announces-month-long-covid-19-vaccine-push>

Too risky to lift French COVID restrictions more quickly than planned - government spokesman

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It is too risky to lift France's COVID-19 restrictions more quickly than planned, since some regions are showing a big jump in COVID cases, said French government spokesman Gabriel Attal. Attal said that even though the national picture showed a steady decline in France's overall COVID cases and deaths, regions such as the Pyrenees-Atlantique area close to Spain, and the Nouvelle-Aquitaine area which houses the major city of Bordeaux, were showing a weekly increase in COVID numbers. The pressure on France's hospital system has been gradually easing over the last two months, after France ended its third national lockdown in May.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/french-covid-cases-up-sharply-several-local-areas-government-spokesman-2021-06-02/>

A COVID-19 Vaccine Could Get West Virginians Cash, Guns Or Trips

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West Virginia is giving its vaccine incentive program a boost to get more residents immunized from the coronavirus, Gov. Jim Justice announced on Tuesday. All residents who get a COVID-19 vaccine will be enrolled in the chance to win a college scholarship, a tricked-out truck, or hunting rifles, in addition to a \$1.588 million grand prize. The program, which will run from June 20 through Aug. 4, will be paid for through federal pandemic relief funds. "The faster we get people across the finish line the more lives we save. That's all there is to it," Justice said. "If the tab just keeps running the cost is enormous. The hospitalizations are enormous. We have to get all of our folks across the finish line."

<https://www.npr.org/2021/06/02/1002345101/guns-trucks-and-trips-west-virginia-expands-prizes-for-vaccinated-residents>

Japan gives \$800M to UN-backed COVID-19 vaccine program

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Japan's prime minister announced Wednesday an additional \$800 million contribution to the U.N.-backed initiative to provide COVID-19 vaccines to poor countries, a four-fold increase of Japanese funding for the COVAX program. The pledge by Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga comes as his government attempts to accelerate vaccinations in Japan, one of the world's least inoculated countries, only about 50 days before it hosts the Olympics amid a continuing surge in infections. He spoke as Japan co-sponsored a fundraising event for COVAX with Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, which helps run the program. The program managers are seeking about \$2 billion more to reach a target of \$8.3 billion for its effort to fund free vaccines for low- and middle-income countries around the world.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/japan-gives-800m-to-unbacked-covid19-vaccine-program-japan-tokyo-scott-morrison-kamala-harris-antonio-guterres-b1858310.html>

Nepal receives 800,000 doses of coronavirus vaccine from China

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Nepal on Tuesday received a consignment of 800,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines from China on grant basis as per the commitment made during talks between Presidents of the two nations. "As conveyed by Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, during the telephone conversation with President Bidya Devi Bhandari on May 26, 2021, a consignment of 800,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine arrived in Kathmandu today," Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated in a release. China on May 26, announced a grant of 1 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines for Nepal.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/nepal-receives-800-000-doses-of-coronavirus-vaccine-from-china-121060200071_1.html

New Mexico Announces \$5 Million Award for Vaccination

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When the book is written about how states across the country tried to persuade people to get coronavirus vaccines, it will not accuse New Mexico of being subtle. On Tuesday, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham announced a lottery program through which the state will award cash prizes totaling \$10 million, including a \$5 million grand prize — among the largest single cash awards being offered by any state with a similar program. New Mexico's program is called Vax to the Max. And its website does not downplay the program's key enticement: "Get Vaccinated for Your Chance to Win the Grand Prize of \$5,000,000!!!" a headline blares. Further down on the website is a large pile of \$100 bills. As Governor Grisham wrote on Twitter: "Register to win! And let's keep N.M. safe and healthy!" <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/us/new-mexico-vaccine-prizes.html>

UK set to buy new Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine designed to protect against South African variant of Covid-19

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Britain is set to buy a new version of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine specifically tailored against the South African variant of coronavirus as local areas step up efforts to protect their population amid a rise in cases. Matt Hancock is planning to announce that the Government is helping to fund clinical trials of a tweaked version of the Oxford/AstraZeneca jab which is designed to protect against the South African strain, i understands. Although less transmissible than the Indian variant, this strain – recently renamed Delta – is thought to be significantly resistant to the current vaccines.

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/uk-set-to-buy-new-oxfordastrazeneca-vaccine-designed-to-protect-against-south-african-variant-of-covid-19/ar-AAKBNtd>

Covid-19: Cummings, Johnson, Hancock, and a maelstrom of avoidable harm

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Boris Johnson's announcement of a public inquiry into his government's handling of covid-19, followed hard on the heels of the news that his former special adviser Dominic Cummings would give evidence against him to the health and science all party select committees.¹ The prime minister, it seemed, was more concerned about how Cummings might damage his reputation than the health of his electorate. Cummings promised a series of revelations damning enough to embarrass any leadership.² He didn't disappoint, and he did more than simply hold court at the hearing, where he was an oracle, a one man systematic review on every pandemic question, the all seeing Eye of Sauron. Whether Cummings's many allegations are correct or not, the inescapable conclusion is that the disastrous manner in which the government is run is a major contributor to excess deaths in the UK, although Johnson persists with his denials. The public inquiry that was needed a year ago—and could be quick and forward looking³—is still promised for next year, but it is a matter of urgency now

<https://www.bmj.com/content/373/bmj.n1404>

Britain hosts G7 health summit amid pressure to broaden COVID vaccine access

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Britain will host health ministers from the Group of Seven (G7) rich countries in Oxford on Thursday for a two-day summit, as pressure intensifies to do more to broaden access to COVID-19 vaccines across the world. British foreign minister Dominic Raab has said that equitable access to coronavirus vaccines will be at the top of the agenda when G7 leaders meet next week. But as health ministers gather at the University of Oxford, where AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine was invented, charities stressed Britain could do more by supporting a temporary waiver on intellectual property rights of pharmaceutical firms.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/britain-hosts-g7-health-summit-amid-pressure-broaden-covid-vaccine-access-2021->

[06-02/](#)

Australia's Victoria state extends COVID-19 lockdown in Melbourne

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Australia's Victoria state on Wednesday extended a COVID-19 lockdown in state capital Melbourne for another week in a bid to contain the latest virus outbreak, but eased restrictions in other regions. The lockdown, imposed on May 27 after the state reported its first locally acquired coronavirus cases, had been scheduled to end Thursday night. It will now end on June 10. The state reported six new locally acquired cases on Wednesday, versus nine a day earlier, taking the total infections in the latest outbreak to 60.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/australias-victoria-state-extends-covid-19-lockdown-melbourne-2021-06-02/>

AstraZeneca starts deliveries of Thailand-made vaccines

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AstraZeneca's partner in Thailand on Wednesday began its first deliveries of COVID-19 vaccines after concerns they were behind on their production schedules for the country and parts of Southeast Asia. Siam Bioscience said the first locally produced AstraZeneca doses were delivered to Thailand's Ministry of Health ahead of the June 7 start of the country's official mass vaccination program. It did not say how many were delivered. AstraZeneca signed with Siam Bioscience last year to be its vaccine production and distribution center in Southeast Asia. It said that the vaccines would be ready for export to other Southeast Asian countries in July. As part of the plan, AstraZeneca has to deliver 6 million doses to Thailand in June, and 10 million doses monthly from July to November, with a final 5 million doses in December.

<https://apnews.com/article/thailand-coronavirus-vaccine-coronavirus-pandemic-business-health-2bf0cf9f527908b214d32db3092edf89>

Donor summit boosts COVAX funds; nations share doses

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The global effort to boost doses of COVID-19 vaccine for low- and middle-income countries got a major shot in the arm today at a Gavi donor conference, netting new pledges totaling \$2.4 billion from nearly 40 groups, including governments, private companies, and foundations. In other developments, the World Health Organization (WHO) said yesterday in its weekly snapshot of the pandemic that although cases have dropped for the fifth week in a row, some countries across all of its regions are experiencing significant rises. And five nations announced plans to share vaccine doses.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/06/donor-summit-boosts-covax-funds-nations-share-doses>

What makes some COVID-19 variants more contagious than others?

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The virus that causes COVID-19 is evolving, with new and more infectious variants taking hold. Last week, Victoria entered a seven-day lockdown due to another COVID-19 outbreak. That has now been extended for at least another seven days in Melbourne. But what makes this outbreak different from others is the spread of a "highly infectious" variant that was first detected in India in October last year.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/health/2021-06-02/what-makes-some-covid-variants-more-contagious-than-others/100179418>

Israel reports link between rare cases of heart inflammation and COVID-19 vaccination in young men

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The COVID-19 vaccine made by Pfizer and BioNTech appears to put young men at elevated risk of developing a heart muscle inflammation called myocarditis, researchers in Israel say. In a report submitted today to the Israeli Ministry of Health, they conclude that between one in 3000 and one in 6000 men ages 16 to 24 who received the vaccine developed the rare condition. But most cases were mild and resolved within a few weeks, which is typical for myocarditis. "I can't imagine it's going to be anything that would cause medical people to say we shouldn't vaccinate kids," says Douglas Diekema, a pediatrician and bioethicist at Seattle Children's Hospital.

<https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2021/06/israel-reports-link-between-rare-cases-heart-inflammation-and-covid-19-vaccination>

Moderna to double EU vaccine manufacturing with new Dutch site

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Moderna will start producing a retooled version of its coronavirus vaccine in the Netherlands, doubling the company's expected EU production, the company announced today. The new contract, inked with the subcontractor Lonza, will allow Moderna to make approximately 300 million doses a year starting at the end of 2021. The Dutch site, in addition to a drug-substance site run by Rovi in Spain, will allow Moderna to make 600 million doses a year in the EU. Currently, the American company doesn't make any drug substance in the EU. Instead, it has outsourced its vaccine substance production to Lonza's site in Switzerland to supply the EU, U.K. and Canada. But production issues there forced the company to cut projected deliveries to the U.K. and Canada earlier this year.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/moderna-to-double-eu-vaccine-manufacturing-with-new-dutch-site/>

Millions of vaccines to be produced at major new Liverpool site

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The national effort to get flu shots in the arms of vulnerable Brits has received a massive boost after the largest vaccine manufacturing site of its type in the UK started work in Liverpool. Although there has understandably been intense focus on the roll out of the coronavirus vaccine, the annual flu vaccination programme is also vitally important to easing winter pressures on the NHS. The high-speed syringe filling and packing facility in Renaissance Way, Speke, operated by pharmaceutical firm Seqirus, will produce more than 50 million doses of seasonal flu vaccine each year, with the ability to increase production to 200 million doses in the event of an influenza pandemic. The site now has a high-speed fill-and-finish facility, which enables start-to-finish onshore manufacturing, where previously the vaccine would be sent abroad to be put into syringes and packed, reports Business Live.

<https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/millions-vaccines-produced-major-new-20723935>

'Black fungus' is creating a whole other health emergency for Covid-stricken India

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Covid-19 has killed millions around the world, but for some who are lucky enough to survive the infection, the nightmare is not over: adding insult to injury are deadly fungal infections that follow in the wake of the virus. Making matters worse, inequities that long predated the pandemic have left some countries without the capacity to combat these serious infections. In India, a fungal infection called mucormycosis has emerged in patients with Covid-19. This infection is caused by a group of fungi that are everywhere on the planet. In fact, all of us are probably inhaling spores of these fungi every day, but these are rapidly controlled by our immune systems. Rarely, our defences are breached, and the fungus takes hold, with devastating consequences. After establishing itself in the nose and sinuses, it begins to invade the tissue of the face, the jaw, the eyes and brain, blocking blood flow and causing tissue death. It is the black discoloration of dead tissue that conferred upon

this mould its fearsome moniker in the Indian media: "the black fungus".

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jun/02/black-fungus-covid-india-mucormycosis?utm_term=Autofe&CMP=twg_gu&utm_medium&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1622615709

UK reports no new COVID-19 deaths for first time since March 2020

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The United Kingdom, which has recorded Europe's highest coronavirus death toll, has announced no new daily COVID-19 deaths for the first time since March last year. The milestone reached on Tuesday spurred hope that the impact of the pandemic was easing, but concerns simmered over a rise in cases linked to the Delta variant first identified in India.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/6/2/uk-reports-no-new-covid-19-deaths-for-first-time-since-march-2020>

China's Guangdong tightens coronavirus measures as cases persist

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Cities in China's most populous province of Guangdong have locked down compounds and streets and ordered some travellers to furnish negative COVID-19 test results, as health officials battle to control outbreaks. All 10 of China's locally confirmed mainland cases on June 1 were in southern Guangdong, the National Health Commission said on Wednesday, seven in the provincial capital of Guangzhou and three in the nearby city of Foshan. China's manufacturing and export hub and its biggest province by economic output, Guangzhou has stepped up coronavirus prevention and control efforts since the latest wave of cases struck in late May.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-reports-24-new-covid-19-cases-cluster-grows-guangzhou-2021-06-02/>

COVID-19: Ryanair boss calls for holiday travel to EU and US to open up and hits out over coronavirus 'scariants'

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Michael O'Leary, the outspoken chief executive of Ryanair, has said it is "absolutely imperative" that "big tourist destinations" such as Greece and Spain be added to the UK's green list at the end of this week. "The restrictions should be lifted, we should be allowing British families to travel to the US and Europe, and also to return without having to complete useless PCR forms for people who've already been vaccinated," Mr O'Leary told Sky News. But scientists have warned that any increase in international travel could put Britain's recovery from COVID-19 at risk, with the potential for new variants to enter the country as tourists return from less vaccinated countries.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-ryanair-boss-hits-out-over-coronavirus-scariants-and-calls-for-travel-to-eu-and-us-to-be-opened-up-12323072>

Russia's Sputnik Light vaccine approved for use in Mauritius - RDIF

Russia's Sputnik Light vaccine approved for use in Mauritius - RDIF

Russia's single-dose Sputnik Light vaccine against COVID-19 has been approved for use in Mauritius, Russia's RDIF sovereign wealth fund, which markets the shot internationally, said on Wednesday.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/russias-sputnik-light-vaccine-approved-use-mauritius-rdif-2021-06-02/>