

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

16th Sep 2021

One Minute Overview

1 in every 500 US residents have died of Covid-19 - The United States has reached another grim milestone in its fight against the devastating Covid-19 pandemic: [1 in 500 Americans have died from coronavirus since the nation's first reported infection](#). As of Tuesday night, 663,913 people in the US have died of Covid-19, according to Johns Hopkins University data. According to the US Census Bureau, the US population as of April 2020 was 331.4 million.

India considers resuming vaccine exports soon, focus on Africa, says source - India is considering resuming exports of COVID-19 vaccines soon, mainly to Africa, [as it has partly immunised a majority of its adults and supplies have surged, a source with knowledge of the matter told Reuters](#). India, the world's [biggest maker of vaccines overall](#), stopped vaccine exports in April to focus on inoculating its own population as infections exploded.

Unvaccinated children suffering COVID impact, Americas health agency warns - As more adults get their COVID-19 vaccines, children who are not yet eligible for vaccination in most countries are representing a larger percentage of hospitalizations and even deaths, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) warned on Wednesday. [Nine months in to this year, infections among children and adolescents in the Americas have surpassed 1.9 million cases](#), and they face significant health risks, the regional branch of the World Health Organization (WHO) said.

As rich-poor divide widens between nations, UN urges reform - A new report from the United Nations on Wednesday highlights divergent economic recoveries between nations and throws fresh urgency behind warnings that richer nations are not doing enough to help poorer countries from falling further behind as the world recovers from COVID-19 disruptions. ["It's really frustrating to see how responses to the pandemic have panned out rather disjointedly,"](#) said Inu Manak, an expert in international political economy at the Cato Institute, a libertarian think-tank based in Washington, DC in the United States.

U.S. Pres Biden to meet executives on COVID-19 mandate - U.S. President Joe Biden will meet on Wednesday with business leaders as he pushes companies to require workers to be vaccinated amid a surge in COVID-19 infections among those without a dose. [Participants in the meeting include the chief executives of Walt Disney, Microsoft and Walgreens Boots Alliance, the White House said](#). Biden last week [announced vaccine mandates for nearly all federal employees](#), federal contractors, and larger companies as the number of U.S. infections continued to rise, hospital beds in some parts of the country filled up and mask requirements returned.

Montana's Largest Hospital Nears 'Crisis Standards of Care' Rationing Over Covid - Montana's largest hospital is considering crisis standards of care procedures that grant authority to decide who receives life-saving treatment, the Billings Gazette reported Wednesday. Intensive care unit capacity at Billings Clinic is at 150% as Covid-19 rages, the newspaper said. ["If it comes to a point where we have to make those incredibly \[difficult\] life or death situations, we will have an objective team that will be available to provide council and make those decisions,"](#) said Laurie Smith, chief nursing officer.

Portugal fully vaccinates 80% of population against COVID-19 - Portugal has fully inoculated

80% of its population against the coronavirus, official data showed, becoming one of the world's most vaccinated nations as authorities gradually drop most COVID-19 restrictions. [According to a Reuters tracker, Portugal and the United Arab Emirates have the same rate of complete vaccinations, jointly leading the world.](#) The southern European nation, which at the start of this year battled what was then the world's worst coronavirus surge, has vaccinated around 8.2 million people out of its population of just over 10 million.

Fed regional banks mandate COVID-19 shots for employees - The U.S. Federal Reserve in Washington and the regional Fed banks will now require all of their nearly 23,000 employees be vaccinated against COVID-19. [The Philadelphia Fed informed its staff of the new mandate in a memo on Wednesday, making it the last of the 12 regional Fed banks to make vaccination a requirement of employment.](#) The Fed Board in Washington will also require its employees to be fully vaccinated by Nov. 30, a spokesperson for the U.S. central bank told Reuters on Wednesday.

U.K. Sidelines Homegrown Astra Vaccine in mRNA Booster Push - Britain will roll out a Covid vaccine booster campaign next week in which the homegrown shot from AstraZeneca Plc and the University of Oxford will hardly feature at all. [Instead, the U.K. government is relying on shots from Pfizer Inc. and Moderna Inc., both based on messenger RNA technology, and only offering Astra in cases where people can't have an mRNA vaccine.](#) AstraZeneca's vaccine, one of the first to be developed, has grappled with safety concerns over potential side effects, including blood clotting. Though the U.S. has not cleared it for use, it's been widely employed in Britain and many other countries, often to inoculate older adults.

Booster Dose Slashes Rates of Covid Infection in Israeli Study - A third dose of the Pfizer Inc.-BioNTech SE Covid vaccine can dramatically reduce rates of Covid-related illness in people 60 and older, according to data from a short-term study in Israel. [Starting 12 days after the extra dose, confirmed infection rates were 11 times lower in the booster group compared with a group that got the standard two doses, the analysis released Wednesday by the New England Journal of Medicine found.](#) Rates of severe illness were almost 20 times lower in the booster group.

Covid USA: Babies could be given low-dose of Pfizer's jab this winter - Pfizer seeking approval to jab kids aged six months to five years by this winter. [Timeline will depend on findings of in-house trials of vaccines on young children.](#) Pfizer's jab already being used for over-12s in majority of countries in the West.

China imposes local lockdowns as COVID-19 cases surge - China tightened lockdowns and increased orders for mass testing in cities along its east coast Wednesday amid the latest surge in COVID-19 cases. Checks have been set up in toll stations around the city of Putian in Fujian province, with a dozen of them closed entirely. [The nearby cities of Xiamen and Quanzhou have also restricted travel as the delta variant spreads through the region. The National Health Commission on Wednesday said an additional 50 cases had been diagnosed in various parts of Fujian,](#) most of them in the Putian region.

Lockdown Exit

Pope urges COVID inoculations, says vaccines are humanity's friends

Pope Francis said on Wednesday he was puzzled why so many people, including some cardinals in Roman Catholic Church hierarchy, have refused to get inoculated against COVID-19. "It is a bit strange because humanity has a history of friendship with vaccines," he said aboard the plane returning from Slovakia, responding to a question from a reporter about the reasons for vaccine hesitancy. "As children (we were vaccinated) for measles, polio. All the children were vaccinated and no one said anything," he said.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/pope-urges-covid-inoculations-says-vaccines-are-humanitys-friends-2021-09-15/>

Opinion | The Delta Variant's Economic Damage Isn't Over

Without more immigration, businesses won't come close to filling the record number of open job positions. Endemic labor shortages were businesses' No. 1 problem before the pandemic. It is even more serious now as many baby boomers have stopped working. Until the pandemic winds down and immigration of both skilled and unskilled workers revives, businesses, especially in big cities, will be unable to get the help they need.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/15/opinion/delta-covid-economy.html>

Moderna says COVID-19 vaccine protection wanes, makes case for booster

New data from Moderna Inc's large COVID-19 vaccine trial shows that the protection it offers declines over time, supporting the case for booster doses, the company said in a news release on Wednesday. Several recent studies have suggested that its vaccine may have an edge over a similar shot from Pfizer Inc and German partner BioNTech SE in terms of maintaining efficacy over time.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/moderna-says-covid-19-vaccine-protection-wanes-makes-case-booster-2021-09-15/>

India considers resuming vaccine exports soon, focus on Africa, says source

India is considering resuming exports of COVID-19 vaccines soon, mainly to Africa, as it has partly immunised a majority of its adults and supplies have surged, a source with knowledge of the matter told Reuters. India, the world's biggest maker of vaccines overall, stopped vaccine exports in April to focus on inoculating its own population as infections exploded.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/india-considers-resuming-vaccine-exports-soon-focus-africa-says-source-2021-09-15/>

Unvaccinated children suffering COVID impact, Americas health agency warns

As more adults get their COVID-19 vaccines, children who are not yet eligible for vaccination in most countries are representing a larger percentage of hospitalizations and even deaths, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) warned on Wednesday. Nine months in to this year, infections among children and adolescents in the Americas have surpassed 1.9 million cases, and they face significant health risks, the regional branch of the World Health Organization (WHO) said.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/unvaccinated-children-suffering-covid-impact-americas-health-agency-warns-2021-09-15/>

Alberta's top doctor says COVID-19 surge stems from removal of restrictions

Alberta's top health official says the fourth wave of COVID-19 that has swamped intensive-care units and forced the widespread cancellations of surgeries was set in motion when the province dropped all public-health restrictions over the summer. Deena Hinshaw, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, also said she regretted her announcement in late July that the province would treat COVID-19 as an "endemic" respiratory illness like influenza. She said it wrongly gave some people the impression that the pandemic was over, which she added has made it more difficult to make the case for additional public-health measures. She made the comments in a presentation to family doctors that was recorded Monday evening and then posted to social media.

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/alberta/article-albertas-top-doctor-says-covid-19-surge-stems-from-removal-of/>

1 in every 500 US residents have died of Covid-19

The United States has reached another grim milestone in its fight against the devastating Covid-19 pandemic: 1 in 500 Americans have died from coronavirus since the nation's first reported infection. As of Tuesday night, 663,913 people in the US have died of Covid-19, according to Johns Hopkins

University data. According to the US Census Bureau, the US population as of April 2020 was 331.4 million.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/15/health/us-coronavirus-wednesday/index.html>

U.S. pushes world leaders to embrace 70% global COVID-19 vaccination target

The United States is pushing global leaders to endorse what it calls ambitious targets for ending the COVID-19 pandemic, including ensuring 70% of the world's population is vaccinated against the virus by the 2022, according to a draft U.S. document viewed by Reuters on Tuesday.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/us-pushes-world-leaders-embrace-70-global-covid-19-vaccination-target-2021-09-14/>

Dutch PM Rutte: Netherlands to ease COVID-19 restrictions

The Dutch government on Tuesday announced they are easing COVID-19 restrictions and will introduce a "corona" pass showing proof of vaccination to go to bars, restaurants, clubs or cultural events. Prime Minister Mark Rutte said most social distancing requirements will be dropped from Sept. 25.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/dutch-pm-rutte-netherlands-ease-covid-19-restrictions-2021-09-14/>

EU pledges 200 million vaccine doses to low-income nations

The European Union's top official said Wednesday that ramping up COVID-19 vaccinations around the world was the bloc's No. 1 priority right now and committed another 200 million vaccine doses to Africa and low-income nations. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen used her State of the European Union speech on Wednesday to announce the new donation that will be fully delivered by the middle of next year and comes on top of 250 million vaccine doses already pledged.

<https://apnews.com/article/europe-business-health-coronavirus-pandemic-covid-19-pandemic-77ad14e702a28e2d2195bc7ecd19f4a3>

As rich-poor divide widens between nations, UN urges reform

A new report from the United Nations on Wednesday highlights divergent economic recoveries between nations and throws fresh urgency behind warnings that richer nations are not doing enough to help poorer countries from falling further behind as the world recovers from COVID-19 disruptions. "It's really frustrating to see how responses to the pandemic have panned out rather disjointedly," said Inu Manak, an expert in international political economy at the Cato Institute, a libertarian think-tank based in Washington, DC in the United States.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2021/9/15/as-rich-poor-divide-widens-between-nations-un-urges>

Exit Strategies

Montana's Largest Hospital Nears 'Crisis Standards of Care' Rationing Over Covid

Montana's largest hospital is considering crisis standards of care procedures that grant authority to decide who receives life-saving treatment, the Billings Gazette reported Wednesday. Intensive care unit capacity at Billings Clinic is at 150% as Covid-19 rages, the newspaper said. "If it comes to a point where we have to make those incredibly [difficult] life or death situations, we will have an objective team that will be available to provide council and make those decisions," said Laurie Smith, chief nursing officer.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-15/montana-s-largest-hospital-close-to-rationing-life-saving-care>

U.S. administers 382.3 mln doses of COVID-19 vaccines - CDC

The United States has administered 382,294,795 doses of COVID-19 vaccines in the country as of Wednesday morning and distributed 461,117,525 doses, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. Those figures are up from the 381,453,265 vaccine doses the CDC said had gone into arms by Sept. 14 out of 458,771,465 doses delivered. The agency said 210,361,099 people had

received at least one dose while 179,695,287 people are fully vaccinated as of 6:00 a.m. ET on Wednesday.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-administers-3823-mln-doses-covid-19-vaccines-cdc-2021-09-15/>

New US immigrants required to get coronavirus vaccine, USCIS says

The United States will require new immigrants to be fully vaccinated against the coronavirus as part of its routine medical examination, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced on Tuesday. The measure goes into effect on Oct. 1. Most people applying to become a permanent resident in the United States are required to receive the immigration medical examination "to show they are free from any conditions that would render them inadmissible under the health-related grounds," according to USCIS. The announcement comes after the Biden administration last week unveiled a sweeping set of vaccination mandates, requiring federal employees to get immunized against the coronavirus, and ordering businesses with more than 100 employees to require vaccinations or weekly testing

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/09/15/us-immigrants-coronavirus-vaccine/>

COVID-19: Javid defends return to office advice after experts warn of hospital admissions soaring

The health secretary says A&E pressures and a rising number of COVID patients could trigger the government's "plan B" for the winter - as experts warned hospital admissions could reach 7,000 a day. Sajid Javid added that a new variant of concern would not necessarily be a trigger as he refused to rule out a lockdown. Plan B, which includes mandatory face masks, a work from home order and vaccine passports, was revealed by the government on Tuesday as part of the autumn and winter plan for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://news.sky.com/story/javid-defends-return-to-office-advice-after-experts-warn-of-covid-hospital-admissions-soaring-12408370>

Portugal fully vaccinates 80% of population against COVID-19

Portugal has fully inoculated 80% of its population against the coronavirus, official data showed, becoming one of the world's most vaccinated nations as authorities gradually drop most COVID-19 restrictions. According to a Reuters tracker, Portugal and the United Arab Emirates have the same rate of complete vaccinations, jointly leading the world. The southern European nation, which at the start of this year battled what was then the world's worst coronavirus surge, has vaccinated around 8.2 million people out of its population of just over 10 million

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/portugal-fully-vaccinates-80-population-against-covid-19-2021-09-15/>

Sydney nightly curfew to end as COVID-19 vaccinations hit fresh milestone

A curfew imposed on more than two million people in the 12 Sydney suburbs hardest hit by the spread of the coronavirus Delta variant will end on Wednesday night, authorities said, stopping short of easing more lockdown restrictions. Officials said first-dose COVID-19 vaccination levels have reached 80% of the New South Wales (NSW) adult population, while the dual-dose rate in Sydney's home state stands at 48% now. That's above the national average of 43%, but well below the 70% level that will trigger the easing of other curbs first imposed three months ago. Authorities expect to achieve the 70% rate around the middle of next month, and plans to relax more restrictions once it has climbed to 80%.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/australias-victoria-state-nears-first-covid-19-vaccination-goal-2021-09-14/>

U.S. Pres Biden to meet executives on COVID-19 mandate

U.S. President Joe Biden will meet on Wednesday with business leaders as he pushes companies to require workers to be vaccinated amid a surge in COVID-19 infections among those without a dose. Participants in the meeting include the chief executives of Walt Disney, Microsoft and Walgreens Boots Alliance, the White House said. Biden last week announced vaccine mandates for nearly all

federal employees, federal contractors, and larger companies as the number of U.S. infections continued to rise, hospital beds in some parts of the country filled up and mask requirements returned.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/biden-meet-executives-microsoft-disney-covid-19-vaccine-mandate-wsj-2021-09-15/>

Covid-19: Close-contact pupils 'should not be sent home from school'

In Northern Ireland, schools should not send pupils home as close contacts or ask them to self-isolate, according to guidance to principals from the Department of Education (DE). It said schools should not identify close contacts unless asked to do so by the Public Health Agency (PHA). The PHA took over responsibility for contact tracing in schools on Friday. The move brings Northern Ireland into line with the approach taken in England, Scotland and Wales.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-58565658>

Covid-19: Government lays out its “plan B” to protect NHS this winter

Ministers will reintroduce a range of precautionary measures against covid-19 this autumn and winter if a further surge in cases threatens to overwhelm the NHS. The government’s plan, published on 14 September, sets out what it calls a “plan B for England” that it will initiate if data suggest the NHS is likely to come under unsustainable pressure during the coming months. Measures would include introducing mandatory vaccine certification in specific settings, bringing back the legal requirement to wear face coverings in some settings, and advising people to work from home if they are able to. The government said it was committed to taking “whatever action is necessary” to protect the NHS from being overwhelmed but said stricter economic and social restrictions such as lockdowns would only be considered as “a last resort.”

<https://www.bmj.com/content/374/bmj.n2270>

Largest colleges push student vaccines with mandates, prizes

At most of the largest U.S. public universities, students are under no obligation to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Some schools do require vaccines, but with leniency for those who opt out. Still others have expelled students who do not comply. As a new semester begins amid a resurgence of the coronavirus, administrators and faculty nationwide see high vaccination rates as key to bringing some normalcy back to campus. Where mandates face political opposition, schools are relying on incentives and outreach to get more students vaccinated. An analysis by The Associated Press shows 26 of the nation’s 50 largest public university campuses are not requiring vaccination, representing roughly 55% of students enrolled at those schools. The AP looked at the largest campuses by 2019-2020 enrollment that offer on-campus housing and award bachelor’s degrees

<https://apnews.com/article/health-education-coronavirus-pandemic-only-on-ap-ca10e95511b4940375c037e871f939cd>

Unvaccinated French health care workers face suspension

Health care workers in France face suspension from their jobs starting Wednesday if they haven’t been vaccinated against COVID-19. With as many as 300,000 workers still not vaccinated, some hospitals fear staff shortages will add to their strain. Vaccines are now compulsory for medical care, home care and emergency workers in France, and Wednesday is the deadline for such staff to have had at least one shot. Failing that, they face having pay suspended or not being able to work. But a top court has forbidden staff to be fired outright.

<https://apnews.com/article/europe-business-health-france-paris-7bf6ca4fac1fd80809eb2af63a2bd6b9>

WHO aims for 30 percent of needed Africa COVID jobs by February

The World Health Organization (WHO) and its partners have said they hope to provide Africa with about 30 percent of the COVID-19 vaccines the continent needs by February, badly missing the 60 percent vaccination coverage goal that African leaders had once hoped for this year. Out of 5.7

billion doses of coronavirus vaccines administered around the world so far, only 2 percent have been in Africa.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/14/who-aims-to-get-africa-30-of-needed-doses-by-february>

Partisan Exits

Raytheon requires U.S. workers get COVID-19 vaccination

Raytheon, the maker of Tomahawk missiles, will require all U.S. employees to have a COVID-19 vaccination, the company said in a Wednesday statement. The employees need to get shots by mid-December in order to meet a Jan. 1 deadline for immunization, a source familiar with policy said.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/raytheon-requires-us-workers-get-covid-19-vaccination-statement-2021-09-15/>

Fed regional banks mandate COVID-19 shots for employees

The U.S. Federal Reserve in Washington and the regional Fed banks will now require all of their nearly 23,000 employees be vaccinated against COVID-19. The Philadelphia Fed informed its staff of the new mandate in a memo on Wednesday, making it the last of the 12 regional Fed banks to make vaccination a requirement of employment. The Fed Board in Washington will also require its employees to be fully vaccinated by Nov. 30, a spokesperson for the U.S. central bank told Reuters on Wednesday.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/the-great-reboot/fed-regional-banks-mandate-covid-19-shots-employees-2021-09-15/>

Fauci dismisses Nicki Minaj's bizarre claim about Covid-19 vaccine: 'A resounding no'

None of the Covid-19 vaccines in use in the United States cause reproductive issues, Dr Anthony Fauci has said in response to Nicki Minaj's recent tweet. The rapper caused controversy after she tweeted the baseless claim that her cousin in Trinidad was not getting vaccinated because his friend took the shot and then allegedly became impotent. When CNN presenter Jake Tapper asked Dr Fauci whether there is any evidence that Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccines pose the health risk Minaj outlined in her controversial tweet, the US's top epidemiologist said the answer is "a resounding no".

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/offbeat/nicki-minaj-fauci-dismisses-artist-s-claim-about-covid-19-vaccine-with-a-resounding-no/ar-AAOsecE>

Conservative radio host who swore off Covid-19 vaccine dies after contracting virus, co-host says

Conservative radio host Pastor Robert "Bob" Enyart, who swore off Covid-19 vaccines, has died from complications due to the virus, his co-host announced on social media. "It comes with an extremely heavy heart that my close friend and co-host of Real Science Radio has lost his battle with Covid," said co-host Fred Williams on Facebook. In October, Enyart won a lawsuit against the state of Colorado over its Covid-19 restrictions, CNN has reported. In a phone call with CNN following the ruling, Enyart said, "We have a right, even an obligation to worship him (God), and that's without government interference."

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/09/14/media/bob-enyart-death-covid/index.html>

COVID-19: Professor Chris Whitty says Nicki Minaj 'should be ashamed' over vaccine tweet - as rapper hits back after 'diss'

Professor Chris Whitty says rapper Nicki Minaj "should be ashamed" after she tweeted an unsubstantiated story about a man who had a COVID vaccine and then allegedly became impotent. Speaking at a Downing Street news conference, England's chief medical officer said: "There are a number of myths that fly around, some of which are just clearly ridiculous and some of which are clearly designed just to scare. "That happens to be one of them."

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-professor-chris-whitty-says-nicki-minaj-should-be-ashamed-over-vaccine-tweet-a>

[s-rapper-hits-back-over-diss-12407987](#)

Will coronavirus vaccine mandates make workers leave their jobs?

A controversial new mandate in the US will require millions of workers to get vaccinated against COVID-19. The move by the world's largest economy raises questions about how much a tight labor market can sustain — and about who else might follow suit. Many countries already require certain workers, like federal or health care employees, to be vaccinated. Starting today, millions of French frontline workers face termination should they remain unvaccinated. Germany's government, on the other hand, has been adamant that it won't require vaccinations, a shocking idea for many in a country where even the right for employers to know if their employees are vaccinated has received major pushback.

<https://www.dw.com/en/will-coronavirus-vaccine-mandates-make-workers-leave-their-jobs/a-59188457>

Chinese defector Wei Jingsheng claims US was warned about Covid-19 months before pandemic declared

A Chinese defector claims he tried to warn top US officials about a deadly new virus in Wuhan five months before the World Health Organisation declared Covid-19 a pandemic. Wei Jingsheng revealed in a shocking new documentary that he took his concerns about the unfolding situation to senior figures within the Trump administration but was subsequently ignored. The long-time democracy campaigner, who has served time in prison for 'counter-revolutionary activities', said he made the approach in November 2019, as whispers of a 'new SARS virus' began circulating on WeChat and other Chinese social media platforms.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9992471/Chinese-defector-Wei-Jingsheng-claims-warned-Covid-19-months-pandemic-declared.html?fr=operanews>

NBA players' union 'rejects COVID-19 vaccine mandate' for 2021-22 season

While NBA coaches, officials, and many league staffers are facing a COVID-19 vaccine mandate, players will not be required to get the injection in order to compete next season unless a compromise can be reached in the coming weeks. With the NBA and the National Basketball Players Association (NBPA) continuing to negotiate COVID-19 protocols, ESPN reported that there will be no vaccine mandate for players — a position the union considers a non-starter. A source familiar with the discussions told DailyMail.com that the NBPA has been very reluctant to agree to any mandate, but stopped short of conceding that the issue settled.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9990563/NBA-players-union-rejects-COVID-19-vaccine-mandate-2021-22-season.html>

COVID-19: 'They're not strangers' - Javid defends maskless cabinet meeting after government advised their use

In the UK, the health secretary has defended members of the cabinet not wearing face coverings during a meeting - saying they are "not strangers". A photo of yesterday's crowded cabinet meeting, with nearly 40 ministers and staff, showed none of them were wearing masks just hours before Boris Johnson laying out his winter plan, which included guidance that people should wear coverings in crowded spaces. But Health Secretary Sajid Javid claimed ministers' actions were "perfectly consistent" with that messaging. An open window could be seen in the room

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-theyre-not-strangers-javid-defends-maskless-cabinet-meeting-after-pm-advised-their-use-12408341>

Big Truckers Say Vaccine Mandate Could Push Drivers Away

Big trucking companies say a federal vaccination and testing mandate aimed at curbing the spread of the Covid-19 virus could push more workers away from their operations and deepen upheaval in U.S. supply chains. Executives say the proposed testing requirements for workers who choose not to get vaccinated could also pose challenges for trucking companies whose fleets haul goods long

distances, often along irregular routes that send drivers from one corner of the country to another over several days or weeks.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/big-truckers-say-vaccine-mandate-could-push-drivers-away-11631657882>

Scientific Viewpoint

CDC Advisers Set Meeting for Next Week on Covid Booster Shots

Advisers to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will hold a two-day meeting next week to discuss booster shots for Covid-19 vaccines. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices posted notice of the meeting, which will be held Sept. 22-23, on its website on Wednesday. The panel of outside experts advises the CDC on how best to administer new vaccines.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-15/cdc-advisers-set-meeting-for-next-week-on-covid-booster-shots>

Why the Delta Variant Is Giving More Children Covid

Covid-19 cases among children are surging across the world amid delta-fueled outbreaks, spurring hospitalizations and raising concern about the risk of severe illness and persistent “long hauler” symptoms. It’s also prompted questions about the safety of schools.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-15/why-the-delta-variant-is-giving-more-children-covid-quicktake>

Booster Dose Slashes Rates of Covid Infection in Israeli Study

A third dose of the Pfizer Inc.-BioNTech SE Covid vaccine can dramatically reduce rates of Covid-related illness in people 60 and older, according to data from a short-term study in Israel. Starting 12 days after the extra dose, confirmed infection rates were 11 times lower in the booster group compared with a group that got the standard two doses, the analysis released Wednesday by the New England Journal of Medicine found. Rates of severe illness were almost 20 times lower in the booster group.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-15/booster-dose-slashes-rates-of-covid-infection-in-israeli-study>

Pfizer (PFE) Says Covid-19 Vaccine Efficacy Erodes Over Time

Pfizer Inc. said that data from the U.S. and Israel suggest that the efficacy of its Covid-19 vaccine wanes over time, and that a booster dose was safe and effective at warding off the virus and new variants. The company detailed the data in a presentation it will deliver to a meeting of outside advisers to the Food and Drug Administration on Friday. The panel is expected to make recommendations for whether more Americans should receive booster shots.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-15/pfizer-says-covid-19-vaccine-efficacy-erodes-over-time>

FDA Says Covid-19 Vaccines Remain Effective Without Boosters

The Food and Drug Administration said vaccines cleared in the U.S. currently provide sufficient protection against severe disease and death from Covid-19 without additional doses, potentially complicating the Biden administration’s deliberations over the need for booster shots. The FDA released the findings Wednesday in a report analyzing data submitted by Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech SE as part of their request for authorization for their vaccine to be given as a booster shot in people 16 years and older. An outside panel of scientific advisers will review the FDA report on Friday, along with a companion analysis from Pfizer and other information, as part of a discussion over who needs booster shots and when.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/fda-says-covid-19-vaccines-remain-effective-without-boosters-11631726504>

Russia's Sputnik V vaccine shows 97.2% COVID-19 efficacy in Belarus - RDIF

Russia's Sputnik V vaccine has demonstrated 97.2% efficacy against COVID-19 during the vaccination campaign in Belarus, Russia's RDIF sovereign wealth fund said on Wednesday.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/russias-sputnik-v-vaccine-shows-972-covid-19-efficacy-belarus-rdif-2021-09-15/>

Single-Dose Sputnik Light Approved For Phase 3 Bridging Trials In India

The single-dose COVID-19 vaccine Sputnik Light received approval from the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) of the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) today to conduct phase 3 bridging trials in India. Last year, Hyderabad-based Dr Reddy's Laboratories had partnered with the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) to conduct phase 3 trials of the vaccine. After the company submitted safety, immunogenicity and efficacy data, the SEC granted permission for conducting the trials in India, a statement by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation said.

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/coronavirus-vaccine-single-dose-sputnik-light-approved-for-phase-3-bridging-trials-in-india-2541459>

CureVac scales back mRNA manufacturing for coronavirus vaccine

CureVac, the German biotech once seen as a leading mRNA vaccine developer alongside Moderna and Pfizer, on Tuesday said it will scale back manufacturing plans for its coronavirus shot in Europe. The company attributed the downsizing to "reduced short-term peak demand for vaccines following the first wave of the pandemic vaccination efforts" as well as "corresponding changes in the demand of its first-generation COVID-19 vaccine candidate." As a result, manufacturing contracts with Wacker and Celonic will be terminated. Other manufacturing agreements with Rentschler Biopharma and Novartis are not affected. CureVac is still awaiting a decision from the European Medicines Agency on approval of its first-generation vaccine. Last month, the company reportedly dropped plans to seek a clearance in the U.S. from the Food and Drug Administration.

<https://www.biopharmadive.com/news/curevac-scale-back-coronavirus-vaccine-manufacturing/606546/>

U.S. buys additional doses of Eli Lilly, Regeneron COVID-19 therapy

Eli Lilly and Company said on Wednesday the U.S. government bought 388,000 additional doses of its COVID-19 antibody therapy, as infections surge due to the fast-spreading Delta variant. The news comes after Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc said late on Tuesday the U.S. government was buying 1.4 million additional doses of its COVID-19 antibody cocktail, REGEN-COV.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-buys-additional-doses-eli-lillys-covid-19-therapy-2021-09-15/>

Covid-19: Boys are more at risk of myocarditis after vaccination than of hospital admission for covid

The risk of 12-15 year old healthy boys experiencing cardiac adverse events such as myocarditis after their second dose of the Pfizer and BioNTech vaccine is around four times adolescents' risk of being admitted to hospital as a result of infection with SARS-CoV-2, a preprint study has found. The retrospective study, which has not yet been peer reviewed, used the US vaccine adverse reporting system (VAERS) to identify the rate of post-vaccination myocarditis among 12-15 and 16-17 year olds between January and June 2021 after the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. The researchers concluded that the rate of cardiac adverse events after the second dose exceeded the expected rate of 120 day covid-19 hospital admission at both a moderate (August 2021) and a high (January 2021) incidence of SARS-CoV-2 infection.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/374/bmj.n2251>

U.K. Sidelines Homegrown Astra Vaccine in mRNA Booster Push

Britain will roll out a Covid vaccine booster campaign next week in which the homegrown shot from AstraZeneca Plc and the University of Oxford will hardly feature at all. Instead, the U.K. government is relying on shots from Pfizer Inc. and Moderna Inc., both based on messenger RNA technology, and only offering Astra in cases where people can't have an mRNA vaccine. AstraZeneca's vaccine, one of the first to be developed, has grappled with safety concerns over potential side effects, including blood clotting. Though the U.S. has not cleared it for use, it's been widely employed in Britain and many other countries, often to inoculate older adults.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-14/u-k-sidelines-homegrown-astra-vaccine-in-mrna-booster-push>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Covid USA: Babies could be given low-dose of Pfizer's jab this winter

Pfizer seeking approval to jab kids aged six months to five years by this winter. Timeline will depend on findings of in-house trials of vaccines on young children. Pfizer's jab already being used for over-12s in majority of countries in the West.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9993523/American-BABIES-given-low-dose-Pfizers-jab-winter.html>

COVID-19: UK records 26,628 new cases and 185 more coronavirus-related deaths, daily figures show

The UK has recorded 26,628 new COVID cases and 185 more coronavirus-related deaths in the latest 24-hour period, according to government data. The figures compare with 30,825 infections and 61 fatalities reported yesterday, while 37,489 cases and 209 deaths were announced this time last week.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-uk-records-26-628-new-cases-and-185-more-coronavirus-related-deaths-daily-figures-show-12407912>

Malaysia's germ-busting clown finds new role in pandemic

When the coronavirus pandemic struck Malaysia, Shaharul Hisam Baharudin, like many others working closely with people, soon lost his work as an entertainer who juggled and sometimes dressed up as a clown. But rather than give up, the 43-year-old from Taiping, in western Malaysia found a new way of using his skills - disinfecting people's homes while wearing his clown's outfit. For his new role, he adapted the smoke machine he had used at parties to become a disinfection device, while providing some extra cheer by entertaining children in his clown outfit, completed by a surgical mask with a painted-on red nose and smile.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/malaysias-germ-busting-clown-finds-new-role-pandemic-2021-09-14/>

COVID-19 cases climbing, wiping out months of progress

COVID-19 deaths and cases in the U.S. have climbed back to levels not seen since last winter, erasing months of progress and potentially bolstering President Joe Biden's argument for his sweeping new vaccination requirements. The cases — driven by the delta variant combined with resistance among some Americans to getting the vaccine — are concentrated mostly in the South. While one-time hot spots like Florida and Louisiana are improving, infection rates are soaring in Kentucky, Georgia and Tennessee, fueled by children now back in school, loose mask restrictions and low vaccination levels.

<https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-health-texas-coronavirus-pandemic-kentucky-9e89fce6ef184baa4703a47d2aefab6>

New Lockdown

China imposes local lockdowns as COVID-19 cases surge

China tightened lockdowns and increased orders for mass testing in cities along its east coast Wednesday amid the latest surge in COVID-19 cases. Checks have been set up in toll stations around the city of Putian in Fujian province, with a dozen of them closed entirely. The nearby cities of Xiamen and Quanzhou have also restricted travel as the delta variant spreads through the region. The National Health Commission on Wednesday said an additional 50 cases had been diagnosed in various parts of Fujian, most of them in the Putian region.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/china-beijing-fujian-covid-quanzhou-b1920373.html>