

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

17th Jun 2022

Lockdown Exit

COVID-era health funding extended by Anthony Albanese in first meeting of new national cabinet

\$760 million more in COVID-era funding will be given to the states. The extended funding deal was given in recognition that the pandemic was continuing. National Cabinet also agreed to health network reforms to ease pressure on emergency departments.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-06-17/national-cabinet-covid-health-funding-extended/101160740>

China Perspective Podcast: China tightens restrictions with 'flash lockdowns' as Covid-19 cases flare-up

An increase in cases makes China tighten up restrictions again, but how sustainable are these "flash lockdowns"? On the international front, despite the strong words directed toward the US during Minister Wei's speech during the Shangri-La Dialogue, his meeting with US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin on the sidelines of the summit could indicate that China does not want their relationship with the US to veer into conflict.

<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/china-perspective-podcast-china-tightens-restrictions-with-flash-lockdowns-as-covid-19-cases-flare-up>

Thailand Mulls Longer Hours for Pubs, Bars as Covid Cases Drop

The country's main Covid-19 task force will consider a proposal on Friday to scrap the mandatory closure, Deputy Prime Minister and Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul told reporters on Thursday. Businesses must still adhere to local rules, which may differ among provinces, he said. Southeast Asia's second-biggest economy has shredding travel and economic restrictions to kick-start growth as new infections have dropped. The relaxations comes as tourism-dependent countries scramble and compete to woo travelers amid accelerating inflation and sagging consumption. "It's time to bring back some normal activities with serious risk of Covid-19 to the public health having receded," said Anutin. The panel will also discuss declaring more safe areas, or the so-called green zones, where the virus outbreak has subsided in recent weeks, he said.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-16/thailand-mulls-longer-hours-for-pubs-bars-as-covid-cases-drop>

Pregnant Mothers in Mexico Saw Death Rates Surge During Height of Covid Pandemic

Vallejo is among the 2,240 mothers in Mexico who've died because of complications from their pregnancy since the pandemic began. When Covid-19 patients overwhelmed the health-care system, government leaders prioritized their care over that of expectant mothers, turning labor and delivery—and more broadly, women's health—into an afterthought. Pregnancy-related death rates across the country spiked by more than 60% in the first year of the pandemic, an analysis published in the journal BMC Public Health shows. By the beginning of 2021, 81 women were dying for every 100,000 live births, based on government data, compared with 24 at the same time in 2019.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-16/pregnant-mothers-in-mexico-saw-death-rates-surge-during-height-of-covid-pandemic>

Beijing Bar-Linked COVID Outbreak Is Easing as Measures Take Effect, Official Says

The city of Beijing on Thursday declared an initial victory in its latest battle with COVID-19 after testing millions of people and quarantining thousands in the past week to stem an outbreak prolonged by a sudden wave of cases linked to a bar. The flare-up at the popular Heaven

Supermarket Bar known for its cheap liquor and rowdy nights emerged just days after the Chinese capital started to lift widespread curbs. Restrictions had been in place for around a month in Beijing to tackle a broader outbreak that began in late April is very modest by global standards, with a total of 351 cases found so far, but reflects how challenging it is, with the high transmissibility of the Omicron variant, for China to make a success out of its strategy of stamping out each cluster of cases as soon as it materialises. "After eight days of hard fighting and the concerted efforts of Beijing residents in the battle, the swift and decisive measures have shown their effect," Beijing city government spokesperson Xu Hejian said.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/beijing-bar-linked-covid-outbreak-is-easing-measures-take-effect-official-says-2022-06-16/>

The Bahamas Removes COVID-19 Testing Requirement for Fully Vaccinated Travellers

In addition to eliminating the mandatory Bahamas Travel Health Visa, the Government of The Bahamas announced today that fully vaccinated travellers will no longer be required to submit to pre-travel COVID-19 testing to enter the country.

<https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/stocks/the-bahamas-removes-covid-19-testing-requirement-for-fully-vaccinated-travellers-1031533523>

Trends are shifting, but Covid-19 and its effects are still not equitable

Through the many phases of the Covid-19 pandemic -- nearly a dozen variants, the introduction of vaccines, the dropping of prevention measures and more -- one thing has remained constant: The virus and its effects are not one-size-fits-all. Over the past few months, two unique trends have emerged: For the first time in the pandemic, Covid-19 case rates in the United States are higher among Asian people, and death rates are higher among White people than any other racial or ethnic group. These trends are a marked shift among groups that, data suggests, have tended to fare better overall during the pandemic. But there are critical limitations in federal data that mask persistent inequities, experts say.

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/16/health/covid-equity-recent-trends/index.html>

Dogs trained to sniff out COVID in schools are getting a lot of love for their efforts

Huntah is part of a program developed by scientists at Florida International University in Miami who have trained dogs to detect COVID on surfaces and in people. The researchers started working with the animals in the early months of the pandemic — and have successfully deployed them in Florida, Hawaii and Massachusetts to sniff out the virus. Similar projects are underway in other countries, including Finland and France.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2022/06/16/1104931711/dogs-trained-to-sniff-out-covid-in-schools-are-getting-a-lot-of-love-for-their-e?t=1655400585005>

India's May trade deficit widens to \$24.29 billion - trade ministry

Covid recovery - India's May trade deficit widened to \$24.29 billion from \$6.53 billion a year ago, a government statement said on Wednesday. May's trade deficit was pushed up by a surge in imports, which rose 62.83% year-on-year to \$63.22 billion, while exports rose 20.55% to \$38.94 billion, revised trade data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry showed.

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/asia/indias-may-trade-deficit-widens-2429-billion-trade-ministry-2022-06-15/>

Exit Strategies

1,967 new Covid cases, 19 more deaths

The country registered 19 more Covid-19 fatalities and 1,967 new cases during the previous 24 hours, the Public Health Ministry announced on Friday morning. This compared with the 17 coronavirus-related fatalities and 2,153 new cases reported on Thursday morning. There were 1,966 local cases and one imported case. On Thursday, 2,123 Covid-19 patients were discharged from

hospitals after recovering from the coronavirus while 21,030 others were receiving treatment (down from 21,205 on the previous day).

<https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2328378/1-967-new-covid-cases-19-more-deaths>

Swiss COVID-19 vaccine purchase plan fails to pass parliament

The Swiss parliament failed to finance the government's plan to buy COVID-19 vaccines in 2023, forcing the cabinet to try to renegotiate contracts with Moderna and Pfizer/Biontech for millions of doses. With the two houses of parliament split over the funding request, budget rules required the adoption of the cheaper version of draft legislation, the SDA news agency said in a report posted on parliament's website.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/swiss-covid-19-vaccine-purchase-plan-fails-pass-parliament-2022-06-16/>

Parents Anxious to Vaccinate Young Children Describe an Agonizing Wait

A committee of experts advising the F.D.A. voted on Wednesday to recommend that the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna pediatric coronavirus vaccines be authorized for young children. If the rest of the regulatory process moves swiftly, children could begin getting the shots as soon as next week. Most parents are not so eager to get their young children vaccinated, surveys have found. A Kaiser Family Foundation survey this spring found that about two in five parents said they planned to wait and see how the vaccine works for others before deciding what to do. And 38 percent said they would definitely not get their children vaccinated, or would do so only if required. A number of parents who wrote that they were in no rush to get their children vaccinated said it was because the children had already been infected with the virus. But at Wednesday's F.D.A. committee meeting, a Moderna official said the company's study found that young children who got Omicron and were vaccinated had greater levels of protection, a conclusion backed by outside research.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/15/us/politics/parents-covid-vaccine.html>

Florida didn't pre-order any COVID-19 vaccines for younger kids, DOH says

Officials from the Florida Department of Health said the state didn't pre-order any COVID-19 vaccines for kids under the age of 5. They say it's up to individual doctor's offices and pharmacies to make their own orders.

<https://news.yahoo.com/florida-didnt-pre-order-covid-114157118.html>

China top Covid-19 fighter calls for all-in-one data portal like Europe's EpiPulse

Two-and-a-half years after China's first Covid-19 cases, leading epidemiologist Liang Wannian has proposed the setting up of an EU-like integrated monitoring and early reporting system for a speedy response to future outbreaks. The current data collection process is "complex and fragmented", said Liang, head of China's Covid-19 response team, as he called for the different monitoring systems to be rolled into an all-in-one network. This would cover not only human health data but also animal farm and waste water monitoring inputs, to help identify novel pathogens and provide seamless access to data on a single platform.

<https://www.msn.com/en-xl/news/other/china-top-covid-19-fighter-calls-for-all-in-one-data-portal-like-europe-e2-80-99s-epipulse/ar-AAyxjtH>

Victorian COVID-19 vaccine mandate rationale 'unclear' given dropped mask rules, expert tells committee

An expert has told a Victorian parliamentary inquiry it is "unclear" why broad vaccine mandates have remained in place when effective rules on masks have not, as another warned COVID-19 was on track to become one of the leading causes of death in Australia this year. Victoria's pandemic oversight committee is examining the state's vaccine mandate and its impact on workers and the spread of COVID-19.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-06-16/victoria-covid-vaccine-mandate-mask-rules-death/101159266>

U.S. FDA advisers back COVID vaccines for children as young as 6 months

Advisers to the U.S Food and Drug Administration on Wednesday unanimously recommended the agency authorize COVID-19 vaccines from Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech for millions of the youngest American children. The committee's recommendation is an important step toward immunizing children under the age of 5 and as young as 6 months old who have not yet been eligible for the shots.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/us-fda-panel-weighs-covid-vaccines-children-young-6-months-2022-06-15/>

Shanghai orders mass COVID testing each weekend until end-July

Shanghai will require all of its 16 districts to organise mass COVID testing for residents every weekend until the end of July, a city official said on Wednesday. Zhao Dandan said that all districts will organise "community screenings" each weekend. Should a district find any community transmission during the week, it will be required to conduct a full screening during which all residents will be subjected to "closed management" movement restrictions until testing is over, he added.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/shanghai-orders-mass-covid-testing-each-weekend-until-end-july-2022-06-15/>

Coronavirus: some patrons of Hong Kong bars adopt happy-go-lucky attitude in response to new rapid testing rule

Some patrons of Hong Kong's best-known nightlife districts have been ignoring a new rapid Covid-19 test requirement for entry to premises, while the city recorded more than 1,000 cases for the second day in a row. A visit by the Post to Lockhart Road in Wan Chai found several customers did not show negative rapid antigen test (RAT) results to staff in at least five venues, as required under the new rule that took effect from 5am on Thursday. Employees at each venue were not seen asking patrons to comply with the measure.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/3181907/customers-should-not-take-rapid-covid-tests>

Partisan Exits

'Anti-vaxxer' hurled rocks at Covid vaccine centres after seeing 'evidence on the internet'

A Warrington man hurled stones through windows at two vaccination centres injuring a security guard as part of an "anti-vaxx" campaign. Conspiracy theorist Paul Edwards, 58, struck in December last year at the centres in North Wales, where he was staying with his father after being kicked out of the marital home in Cheshire. Edwards was found guilty of two counts of damaging property at Mold Crown Court yesterday (Wednesday), after the attacks in Llandudno and St Asaph. He told the court he believed his actions were a "last chance" to get his anti-vaccination message across, reports WalesOnline.

<https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/anti-vaxxer-hurled-rocks-covid-24239517>

Tasmanian government spent \$700k on COVID-19 hotel — only for it to never be used

The hotel was refurbished to be used as a COVID case management facility, but it was deemed unsuitable due to storm damage. Opposition Leader Rebecca White said the state government needed to try to recoup taxpayer money spent Deputy Premier Michael Ferguson said the facility was selected by the Health Department and he was not aware of who owned it

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-06-16/tasmanian-government-spent-700k-on-unused-hotel/101158498>

Covid care home restrictions in Scotland caused harm, says report

Severe restrictions imposed on care home residents in Scotland during the Covid pandemic caused "harm and distress" and may have contributed to some deaths, academics have said. A 143-page report has been produced by Edinburgh Napier University. It had been commissioned by the

independent inquiry into the country's handling of the pandemic. The report says that the legal basis for confining residents to their rooms and banning visitors was "unclear". And it said care home residents were arguably discriminated against compared to other citizens.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-61814662>

Scientific Viewpoint

More South Australians now able to test for different viruses at COVID drive-through sites

More vulnerable South Australians will now be able to test for 12 different viruses, such as influenza, alongside their COVID-19 tests. The test can detect a dozen viruses including COVID, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus. Flu cases are skyrocketing in SA. The multi-virus tests take about 24 hours to process SA Pathology has doubled its multi-virus testing from 500 to 1,000 a day to support doctors to give early diagnosis and treatment to at-risk patients. Tests are available at drive-through testing clinics and at private pathologies with a GP referral, which can also be obtained via telehealth. Health Minister Chris Picton said multi-virus testing has been available since the start of the pandemic, but spiking flu cases have prompted health authorities to provide more testing.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-06-17/more-multi-virus-testing-available-at-sa-drive-through-sites/101160646>

WHO getting monkeypox tests for Africa, urges vaccine readiness

The World Health Organization (WHO) is in the process of procuring thousands of monkeypox tests for Africa but is not recommending mass vaccination at this stage, WHO Africa Director Matshidiso Moeti said on Thursday. She added that the continent should be prepared for vaccination should the need arise.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/who-getting-monkeypox-tests-africa-urges-vaccine-readiness-2022-06-16/>

EMA begins rolling review of Pfizer-BioNTech's Covid-19 vaccine

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) has commenced a rolling review of Pfizer and BioNTech's variant-adapted version of their Covid-19 vaccine, Comirnaty. This review is preliminarily based on chemistry, manufacturing, and controls (CMC) data submitted to the EMA recently. As the development of the adapted vaccine advances and clinical data become available, including findings on immunogenicity against Omicron and its subvariants, it will be included in the rolling submission. By initiating a rolling review, the regulatory agency will be able to analyse these findings when they become available. The rolling review will progress until sufficient data for a formal application is obtained.

<https://www.pharmaceutical-technology.com/news/ema-rolling-review-comirnaty/>

Fauci: NIH is researching a pan-coronavirus vaccine to combat COVID-19 twists, new threats

Dr. Anthony Fauci, speaking by video-link because he contracted COVID-19, told Congress on Thursday his agency is studying vaccines that better target the omicron variant and it will be "paramount" to develop a new generation of shots that can tackle a range of coronaviruses. Dr. Fauci said existing vaccines can stave off severe disease from spinoffs of the virus first detected in China, especially if someone is boosted. But the National Institutes of Health is trying to increase the breadth of the vaccines' immune response and improve children's uptake. "Looking ahead to the anticipated emergence of new variants, the importance of developing the next generation of coronavirus vaccines is paramount," said Dr. Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. "This virus is changing, and we need to keep up with it."

<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/jun/16/fauci-nih-researching-pan-coronavirus-vaccine-comb/>

Researchers evaluate artemisinin for COVID-19 management

A study observed that artesunate-mefloquine displayed high anti-SARS-CoV-2 activity with approximately $72.1 \pm 18.3\%$ inhibition. Additionally, other ACTs such as artesunate-amodiaquine, artesunate-pyronaridine, artemether-lumefantrine, and dihydroartemisinin-piperaquine also inhibited SARS-CoV-2 by 27.1 to 34.1%. This indicated that ACT drugs could be effectively used for COVID-19 treatment. Artesunate was also found to inhibit the production of interleukin-1B (IL-1B), IL-6, and IL-8. Since high IL-6 levels in COVID-19 patients have been attributed to the cytokine release syndrome, controlling the levels of IL-6 could potentially reduce the severity of COVID-19. Overall, the study revealed that A. annua, and artemisinin and its derivatives such as artemether and artesunate could potentially inhibit SARS-CoV-2. The researchers believe that Artemisia-based treatment options could be used to boost immunity and improve tolerance against viral infections such as COVID-19.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20220616/Researchers-evaluate-artemisinin-for-COVID-19-management.aspx>

Valneva reaches COVID-19 vaccine settlement with UK government, while EU deal remains uncertain

Valneva has reached a settlement with the UK government over an abandoned COVID-19 vaccine contract. Meanwhile, the future of its COVID-19 vaccine in the EU could become clearer next week after an EMA committee vote.

<https://www.biopharma-reporter.com/Article/2022/06/16/valneva-reaches-settlement-with-uk-government-over-covid-19-vaccine>

Valneva reaches settlement with Britain on COVID-19 vaccine deal termination

French drugmaker Valneva said on Wednesday it reached a settlement agreement with the British government linked to the termination of the supply agreement for its COVID-19 vaccine candidate VLA2001. Valneva said in September that it had received a termination notice from the British government of its COVID-19 vaccine supply deal, sending its shares plunging 35% that day. The settlement agreement resolves certain matters relating to the obligations of the company and the British government following the termination of the supply agreement, Valneva said.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/valneva-reaches-settlement-agreement-with-britain-termination-covid-19-vaccine-2022-06-15/>

Despite efficacy doubts, FDA advisors endorse Pfizer, Moderna COVID shots for preschoolers

An FDA advisory committee of independent specialists has recommended by a unanimous vote that the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines be sanctioned for preschoolers. While the blessing sets up the vaccines for long-awaited FDA authorizations, questions remain about how effective the shots will be given the rapidly evolving virus. The panel based its recommendation on clinical data gathered early this year when the omicron variant was predominant. Months later, the BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants of omicron are quickly changing the COVID landscape. CDC data show that the new strains account for 21% of new infections. Just five weeks ago, BA.4 and BA.5 accounted for just 1% of cases.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/amid-doubts-about-efficacy-fda-advisory-committee-signs-pfizer-moderna-shots-preschoolers>

FDA advisers endorse 1st COVID-19 shots for kids under 5

The first COVID-19 shots for U.S. infants, toddlers and preschoolers moved a step closer Wednesday. The Food and Drug Administration's vaccine advisers gave a thumbs-up to vaccines from Moderna and Pfizer for the littlest kids. The outside experts voted unanimously that the benefits of the shots outweigh any risks for children under 5 — that's roughly 18 million youngsters. They are the last age group in the U.S. without access to COVID-19 vaccines and many parents have been anxious to protect their little children. If all the regulatory steps are cleared, shots should be available next

week.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-science-politics-health-us-news-368ca7b4ab393dc48ffa04b5a3171d5b>

People who caught Covid in first wave get 'no immune boost' from Omicron

People who caught Covid during the first wave of the pandemic get no boost to their immune response if they subsequently catch Omicron, a study of triple vaccinated people reports. Experts say that while three doses of a Covid jab help to protect individuals against severe outcomes should they catch Omicron, previous infections can affect their immune response. "If you were infected during the first wave, then you can't boost your immune response if you have an Omicron infection," said Prof Rosemary Boyton, of Imperial College London, a co-author of the study. The team also found an Omicron infection offered little extra protection against catching the variant again. "When Omicron started flying around the country, people kept saying that's OK, that will improve people's immunity," said Boyton. "What we're saying is it's not a good booster of immunity."

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/14/people-who-caught-covid-in-first-wave-get-no-immune-boost-from-omicron>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Covid-19 Disrupts Summer Plans as Variants Keep Case Numbers High

Many people are embarking on a summer of vacations, concerts and weddings put off during the height of the pandemic. Covid-19 is still finding ways to disrupt some of those plans. Covid-19 isn't causing acute illness and death on the scale it once did, thanks in part to protection built up by vaccines and prior infections. But Covid-19 is far from under control, epidemiologists say, and the virus is sickening and sidelining people from work or social events as it continues to spread. "People can't come to work. People are short-staffed," said Jason Salemi, an associate professor of epidemiology at the University of South Florida College of Public Health. "Covid-19 is still inflicting enough damage."

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/covid-19-disrupts-summer-plans-as-variants-keep-case-numbers-high-11655381300>

WHO: COVID-19 deaths rise, reversing a 5-week decline

After five weeks of declining coronavirus deaths, the number of fatalities reported globally increased by 4% last week, according to the World Health Organization. In its weekly assessment of the pandemic issued on Thursday, the U.N. health agency said there were 8,700 COVID-19 deaths last week, with a 21% jump in the Americas and a 17% increase in the Western Pacific. WHO said coronavirus cases continued to fall, with about 3.2 million new cases reported last week, extending a decline in COVID-19 infections since the peak in January. Still, there were significant spikes of infection in some regions, with the Middle East and Southeast Asia reporting increases of 58% and 33% respectively.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-health-east-asia-world-organization-pandemics-44c5a1848febea470e84a569bd6ea141>

India records 12213 new daily cases of COVID-19

India recorded 12,213 new coronavirus infections in the past 24 hours, the health ministry said on Thursday, its highest such tally in nearly four months. The country's richest state of Maharashtra had 4,024 new infections on Wednesday, with the capital, New Delhi, reporting more than 1,000 daily cases for a second successive day. Thursday's figure is the highest since February 26, a Reuters tally showed.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/india-records-12213-new-daily-cases-covid-19-2022-06-16/>

Beijing declares initial COVID victory as bar-linked surge eases

The city of Beijing on Thursday declared an initial victory in its latest battle with COVID-19 after testing millions of people and quarantining thousands in the past week to stem an outbreak

prolonged by a sudden wave of cases linked to a bar. The flare-up at the popular Heaven Supermarket Bar known for its cheap liquor and rowdy nights emerged just days after the Chinese capital started to lift widespread curbs. Restrictions had been in place for around a month in Beijing to tackle a broader outbreak that began in late April. The surge since June 9 is very modest by global standards, with a total of 351 cases found so far, but reflects how challenging it is, with the high transmissibility of the Omicron variant, for China to make a success out of its strategy of stamping out each cluster of cases as soon as it materialises. "After eight days of hard fighting and the concerted efforts of Beijing residents in the battle, the swift and decisive measures have shown their effect," Beijing city government spokesperson Xu Hejian said.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/beijing-bar-linked-covid-outbreak-is-easing-measures-take-effect-official-says-2022-06-16/>

North Korea faces infectious disease outbreak amid COVID battle

North Korea reported an outbreak of an unidentified intestinal epidemic in a farming region on Thursday, putting further strain on the isolated country as it battles chronic food shortages and a wave of COVID-19 infections. Leader Kim Jong Un sent medicines to the western port city of Haeju on Wednesday to help patients suffering from the "acute enteric epidemic", state news agency KCNA said, without giving the number affected, or identifying the disease.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/nkorea-reports-another-infectious-disease-outbreak-amid-battle-against-covid-2022-06-16/>

Is there a new Covid wave? How many cases there are in the UK and why there are concerns over new variant

Covid infections have shot up by 47 per cent this month, prompting fears the UK is embarking on its third wave of the year. Daily symptomatic infections have increased by 53,943, from 114,030 on 1 June to 167,973 on Tuesday, according to the latest figures from the ZOE Covid study app. The four-day weekend of Platinum Jubilee celebrations kicked off on 2 June, so much of the rise has been put down to street parties and other events held across the country to mark the occasion. But the post-Jubilee increase was expected to peak at about 150,000 cases a day before dropping a bit and stabilising. Instead, numbers have carried on going up, with substantial daily increases in recent days. It is entirely possible that cases could soon peak and begin to fall, but there are growing fears we are in the early stages of a new wave driven by the new Omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/science/is-there-a-new-covid-wave-how-many-cases-there-are-in-the-uk-and-why-there-are-concerns-over-new-variant-1689959>

Portugal's COVID deaths grow as tourism season kicks off

Marie Braud until recently considered herself an anomaly. Despite travelling extensively for her work, the recruiter had managed to avoid testing positive for COVID-19 throughout the coronavirus pandemic. But that all changed in June. The 37-year-old began to experience fever and fatigue shortly after attending the Santos Populares festival. She thought it was a cold at first, but after taking a PCR test on June 8, it was confirmed she had COVID-19.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/6/16/portugals-covid-deaths-grow-as-tourism-season-kicks-off>

PAHO: COVID-19 Infections Increase by 11% In the Americas

Of the 34 countries and territories, Covid-19 hospitalizations rose in 15 during the previous week in the Americas. Cuba marked the difference with the 11th day with less than 100 infections. COVID-19 cases in the Americas increased 11 percent last week over the previous week, with a total of 1.2 million new cases and 4,069 new deaths reported, according to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in its most recent update of pandemic data in the region.

<https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/PAHO-COVID-19-Infections-Increase-by-11-In-the-Americas-20220615-0023.html>