

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

6th Jul 2021

Overnight News RoundUp

Lambda lineage of SARS-CoV-2 has potential to become a Variant of Concern

- Researchers have described the first reported infection with the C.37 (Lambda) lineage of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in southern Brazil.
- [The SARS-CoV2 virus is the agent responsible for the ongoing coronavirus disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) pandemic.](#) The Lambda lineage was classified as a variant of interest (VOI) by the World Health Organization on June 15th, 2021.
- The C.37 variant, which lies within the B.1.1.1 lineage, has already been reported as highly prevalent in Peru and has also been identified in many countries across the Americas, Europe, and Oceania, says Pricila Wink from the Hospital de Clinicas de Porto Alegre in Rio Grande do Sul and colleagues.
- However, C.37 has only been reported occasionally in Brazil despite its global spread, adds the team.
- Now, Wink and colleagues have described the first case of C.37 in Southern Brazil. The researchers discovered eight defining mutations in the variant, in addition to the 19 mutations that have already been described for other members of this lineage.

Emerging variants threaten the efficacy of COVID-19 control strategies

- Since SARS-CoV-2 was first identified in late December 2019, new VOIs and variants of concern (VOCs) have emerged with potentially increased transmissibility and reduced sensitivity to antibody neutralization following infection or vaccination.
- The emergence of these lineages may impact the efficacy of strategies to control the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The novel Lambda variant was detected in Peru in August 2020 and has been identified in 26 other countries, says Wink and colleagues.

What did the researchers do?

- Now, the team has described the first reported case of the SARS-CoV2 Lambda variant in Southern Brazil.
- A young male who had visited Argentina developed respiratory symptoms while returning to his hometown in Rio Grande do Sul, the southernmost Brazilian state.
- He was admitted to a local hospital two days later but was then transferred to the intensive care unit of Hospital de Clinicas de Porto Alegre a further two days later due to worsening symptoms.
- Infection with SARS-CoV-2 was confirmed by real-time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) testing of nasopharyngeal swabs and a specimen was submitted for whole genome sequencing.

What did they find?

- Sequencing of the resulting genomic libraries revealed that the C.37 variant is defined by a a

deletion (3675-3677) in open reading frame 1a (ORF1a) of SARS-CoV-2. The ORF1a gene codes for a protein that undergoes proteolytic cleavage before it goes on to make nonstructural viral proteins.

- The deletion has also been identified in the Alpha (B.1.1.7) variant that emerged in the UK, the Beta (B.1.351) variant that emerged in Southern Africa, and the Gamma (P.1) variant that emerged in Brazil.
- The Lambda variant also contained a novel deletion (246-252) and multiple nonsynonymous mutations (G75V, T761, L452Q, F490S, D614G and T859N) in the gene that encodes the viral spike protein. The spike is the main surface structure the virus uses to bind to and infect host cells.
- The mutations L452Q and F490S are present in the spike receptor-binding domain (RBD) which mediates the initial stage of infection by binding to the host cell receptor angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2).
- The F490S mutation has previously been associated with reduced susceptibility to antibody neutralization, says Wink and colleagues.
- The researchers say that in addition to these eight C.37-defining mutations, 19 mutations were also present that have already been described in other members of the lineage.

The team expects that C.37 will become a variant of concern

- The team says the high prevalence of this new VOI has already been described in Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Argentina, where it is associated with substantial rates of community transmission.
- The researchers say that it is not yet known whether this variant is more transmissible or more pathogenic than other variants or whether it is able to escape vaccine-induced immunity.

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Researchers have described the first reported infection with the C.37 (Lambda) lineage of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in Southern Brazil. The SARS-CoV-2 virus is the agent responsible for the ongoing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The Lambda lineage was classified as a variant of interest (VOI) by the World Health Organization on June 15th, 2021. The C.37 variant, which lies within the B.1.1.1 lineage, has already been reported as highly prevalent in Peru and has also been identified in many countries across the Americas, Europe and Oceania, says Priscila Wink from the Hospital de Clínicas de Porto Alegre in Rio Grande do Sul and colleagues.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20210627/Lambda-lineage-of-SARS-CoV-2-has-potential-to-become-variant-of-concern.aspx>

Johnson makes masks voluntary in landmark shift from 'government diktat to personal responsibility'

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All social distancing and mask-wearing rules will be abolished in England as Prime Minister Boris Johnson gambles that his world-leading vaccine rollout will blunt the impact of an impending surge of new infections. Announcing a landmark shift from "government diktat to relying on people's personal responsibility", Johnson said vaccines offered Britain the chance to fundamentally alter how it treats the pandemic.

<https://www.smh.com.au/world/europe/johnson-makes-masks-voluntary-in-landmark-shift-from-government-diktat-to->

[personal-responsibility-20210705-p5873n.html](https://www.independent.co.uk/business/personal-responsibility-20210705-p5873n.html)

Test and trace check-in no longer required under new proposals for businesses

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Bars and pubs will no longer need customers to sign into venues using the Test and Trace app and restrictions on how many people can meet will end, the Government has announced. New guidance published by the Government, due to come into effect from July 19 will also see all settings allowed to reopen, including nightclubs and karaoke bars. Limits on social contact of six people or two households indoors, along with 30 people outdoors will also be scrapped and Covid-secure restrictions including table service can end.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/business/test-and-trace-checkin-no-longer-required-under-new-proposals-for-businesses-b1878561.html>

Nightclubs and mass events to reopen on July 19 with no cap on attendance

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Organisers of highly anticipated large events including festivals and the Premier League will be left to decide their Covid policy themselves - including whether to ask for certification

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/breaking-nightclubs-mass-events-reopen-24464799>

Spain restricts nightlife as virus surges among the young

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Faced with soaring numbers of new coronavirus infections among unvaccinated young people, some Spanish regions are reinstating curbs on nightlife only weeks after dropping them. Fearing that the surging contagion could strain health care services as stressed employees try to go on summer holidays, health officials in several parts of the country are also rushing to get COVID-19 vaccine shots to people under 30. Spain's strict vaccination rollout has so far focused on older, more vulnerable groups, leaving the vaccination of teenagers and people in their 20s for the summer.

<https://apnews.com/article/europe-spain-coronavirus-pandemic-health-business-c03dead9ceedeb6f1e3e563d8cea2a68>

Indonesia seeks more oxygen for COVID-19 sick amid shortage

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Parts of Indonesia lack oxygen supplies as the number of critically ill COVID-19 patients who need it increases, the nation's pandemic response leader said Monday, after dozens of sick people died at a public hospital that ran out of its central supply. "Due to an increase of three to four times in the amount (of oxygen) needed, the distribution has been hampered," said Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, the coordinating maritime affairs and investment minister. The government is asking oxygen producers to dedicate their full supply to medical needs and will import it if needed, Pandjaitan said at a virtual news conference. The statement comes after Health Minister Budi Gunadi Sadikit said the government guaranteed oxygen supply for COVID-19 patients on June 25.

<https://apnews.com/article/indonesia-coronavirus-pandemic-health-b8d4f8e18a9b1569551b0ba12d385037>

Ghana plans to issue Africa's first social bonds with \$2B sale

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Ghana would be pioneering social bonds in Africa, seizing on an instrument that's boomed since the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2021/7/5/ghana-plans-to-issue-africas-first-social-bonds-with-2b-sale>

Ivory Coast sends mobile clinics to speed up COVID vaccinations

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Ivory Coast began sending mobile clinics on Monday to markets and other busy areas in its main city Abidjan in an effort to turbocharge the vaccination campaign against COVID-19. After administering fewer than 800,000 doses since vaccinations began in March - enough for a single dose for just 3% of the population - Ivorian health authorities are now aiming to inoculate a million people in Abidjan over the next 10 days.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/ivory-coast-sends-mobile-clinics-speed-up-covid-vaccinations-2021-07-05/>

Local lockdowns could still be imposed after Covid 'freedom day' if new variants emerge

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Local lockdowns could still be imposed in England after the so-called Covid "freedom day", Sajid Javid has revealed. Ministers will retain laws that allow local authorities to shut down businesses, prohibit certain events, or close outdoor public spaces "in case of a local breakout" or in case a new dangerous variant emerges, the Health Secretary told MPs. "We will be keeping in place contingency measures, particularly for local authorities, the so-called No.3 regulations, at least until the end of September, in case those powers are needed in the case of a local breakout," Mr Javid told the Commons.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/local-lockdowns-imposed-covid-freedom-day-new-variants-emerge-sajid-javid-reveals-1087611>

U.S. Ready to Deploy Booster Shots If Needed, Biden Aide Says

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The U.S. government is ready to deploy booster shots if scientists and health officials determine they're needed in the fight against Covid-19, White House pandemic response coordinator Jeff Zients said. With increases in cases in parts of the U.S. linked to low vaccination rates and the more-contagious delta variant that's spreading throughout the nation, Zients said President Joe Biden's administration will push ahead with encouraging young people and others to get shots.

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-07-04/u-s-ready-to-deploy-booster-shots-if-needed-biden-aide-says?cmpid=socialflow-twitter-business&utm_medium=social&utm_content=business&utm_campaign=socialflow-organic&utm_source=twitter

Vaccination for people aged 18-34 opens at more than 800 pharmacies

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Vaccinations against Covid-19 for people aged between 18 and 34 begin on Monday in Ireland, as more than 800 pharmacies across the country begin administering the one-shot Janssen/Johnson & Johnson jab. The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (Niac) recently changed its advice to allow people aged under 40 to receive the J&J and AstraZeneca shots as the State seeks to widen the vaccine rollout amid concern about the spread of the Delta variant. The news comes as the limit is removed on the number of people who can visit a private home together if they are all fully vaccinated or have recovered from Covid-19 in the previous 9 months.

https://www.irishtimes.com/news/health/vaccination-for-people-aged-18-34-opens-at-more-than-800-pharmacies-1.4611785?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter

India's Panacea Biotec jumps 9% on manufacturing licence for Sputnik V vaccine

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Shares of India's Panacea Biotec Ltd climbed as much as 9% in early trade on Monday, a day after the biotech company said it had received a manufacturing licence for the Sputnik V vaccine. India has shifted its focus to mass immunisations as experts warn of a looming third wave of the coronavirus pandemic as the country slowly reopens and a new variant, locally called the Delta Plus, emerges.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/indias-panacea-biotec-jumps-9-manufacturing-licence-sputnik-v-vaccine-2021-07-05/>

Morocco's Sothema to produce China's Sinopharm vaccine

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Moroccan pharmaceutical firm Sothema will soon start production of 5 million doses a month of China's Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine in the North African country, state news agency MAP reported on Monday. The announcement was made at a ceremony chaired by King Mohammed VI during which the Moroccan government, Sinopharm and Sothema, whose formal name is Société Thérapeutique Marocaine, also signed deals to produce the vaccine in Morocco, which has a population of about 36 million.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/moroccos-sothema-produce-chinas-sinopharm-vaccine-2021-07-05/>

Covid-19: Head teacher 'nervous' about lifting restrictions

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The head of a school in Worcestershire has said she fears what will happen in schools when Covid measures are lifted. Government ministers have called for the system, where groups of pupils have to self-isolate if one tests positive, to be scrapped by autumn. Hanley Castle High School head Lindsey Cooke said those systems had "served schools really well" in the pandemic. But Birmingham father Thomas Kirby said school bubbles meant pupils faced stricter restrictions than adults. The British Medical Association is also calling for the continued use of face masks and new ventilation standards beyond 19 July when all legal restrictions are due to be lifted.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-57712411>

Australia is paying hundreds of millions to AstraZeneca for COVID-19 vaccines. But the deal is a 'national security' secret

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The Australian government's entire vaccine supply agreement with AstraZeneca is being withheld from public release on the grounds it poses a "real and substantial risk" to national security if it were released. Gavin Hayman, the executive director of global advocacy group Open Contracting, said Australia's blanket suppression of the deal was striking and at odds with other nations. "There is no merit in using a national security argument for keeping the vaccine contract hidden from public sight," he said. "In fact, national security is best served by building public trust in the entire vaccination program. We think publishing the contract with a clear explanation of its key terms can contribute to that."

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-07-05/australia-covid-astrazeneca-deal-withheld-national-security/100261920>

Fewer than half of US states have reached the White House's July 4th vaccine goal as the Delta variant threatens the nation's progress

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Twenty states have reached the Biden administration's goal to partially vaccinate 70% of American adults by the Fourth of July as the Delta variant spreads and people gather for holiday celebrations across the country. White House officials acknowledged last month that they would fall short of their goal, which was set in early May when the US was vaccinating people at a much faster pace than it is now. The US reached its highest vaccination rate in mid-April when the seven-day average of doses administered daily topped 3.3 million. At that time, 1.8 million new people became fully vaccinated each day.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/07/04/health/us-coronavirus-sunday/index.html>

How the Covid-19 unlocking could further divide the UK

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The government will today announce the end to almost all restrictions in England on 19 July, meaning table service, test-and-trace doohickeys at every establishment and social distancing will be scrapped, along with the legal obligation to wear masks in enclosed spaces, including public transport. Is it too early to unlock? Scientists are divided. Some believe that we should wait until everyone has been given the opportunity to have both Covid jabs to minimise the risk to the young posed by the Delta variant and of new, vaccine-resistant variants. Others think that with the elderly and vulnerable vaccinated, and the reality that Covid-19 will be with us forever, now is the time to begin returning to normality.

<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2021/07/how-covid-19-unlocking-could-further-divide-uk>

Thousands thought they were getting the Covid vaccine. They were injected with salt water instead

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Thousands of people have fallen prey to an elaborate wide-ranging scam selling fake coronavirus vaccines in India, with doctors and medical workers among those arrested for their involvement, authorities say. At least 12 fake vaccination drives were held in or near the financial hub Mumbai, in the country's western Maharashtra state, said Vishal Thakur, a senior official of the Mumbai police department. "They were using saline water and injecting it," Thakur said. "Every fake vaccination camp that they held, they were doing this."

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/07/05/india/india-fake-covid-vaccine-scam-intl-hnk/index.html>

Bangladesh extends lockdown to combat COVID-19 surge

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Bangladesh on Monday extended its strictest lockdown to July 14 to combat a surge in coronavirus cases led by the highly contagious Delta variant, with areas bordering India taking the brunt of infections. The south Asian country reported 164 new coronavirus deaths on Monday, its biggest daily rise since the pandemic began, taking the death toll to 15,229. It also reported the highest-ever number of new daily infections at 9,964, with the total standing at 954,881. Hospitals are overwhelmed with coronavirus patients, particularly in districts bordering India where the Delta variant was first identified. Bangladesh sealed its border with India in April, but trade continues.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/bangladesh-extends-lockdown-combat-covid-19-surge-2021-07-05/>

Norway delays full reopening over Delta COVID-19 variant

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Norway announced the easing of some COVID-19 restrictions on Monday but delayed the final phase of reopening the economy until the end of this month at the earliest because of concerns about the Delta coronavirus variant. Measures that will remain include bars and restaurants being limited to table service, limits of 20 people on gatherings in private homes, and restrictions on adult recreational sports.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/norway-delays-reopening-delta-variant-threat-looms-pm-says-2021-07-05/>

Scientists identify natural SARS-CoV-2 super immunity against 23 variants

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A team of international scientists has recently identified ultrapotent anti-severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) antibodies from convalescent donors. The antibodies are capable of neutralizing a wide range of SARS-CoV-2 variants even at sub-nanomolar concentrations. In addition, the combinations of these antibodies reduce the risk of generating escape mutants in

vitro. The study is published in the journal Science.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20210705/Scientists-identify-natural-SARS-CoV-2-super-immunity-against-23-variants.aspx>

Lambda variant: What is the new strain of Covid detected in the UK?

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The Lambda variant - known to scientists as C.37 - was first identified in Peru and has been detected in samples dating back to as early as December 2020. Since then it has become the dominant variant in the South American country, where it accounts for more than 80 per cent of new infections. It has now been detected in at least 26 countries, including the UK. So should we be concerned? The World Health Organisation designated the Lambda variant as a variant of interest on 14 June.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/covid-uk-lambda-variant-peru-b1878416.html>

Ministry data said to show Pfizer shot blocks majority of serious Delta cases

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Figures reportedly indicate vaccine less effective against contagion from variant, but hospitalizations remain low; officials said weighing use of Moderna for 2nd dose for over 18s, New Health Ministry figures reported by the Ynet news site indicated that over the past month, the vaccine, which has been the one used for almost all vaccinated Israelis, has been just 64 percent effective in preventing coronavirus infection. The data reportedly shows that during May, when the strain was less prevalent, the vaccine was 94.3% effective.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/ministry-data-said-to-show-pfizer-shot-blocks-majority-of-serious-delta-cases/>

Israel sees drop in Pfizer vaccine protection against infections

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Israel reported on Monday a decrease in the effectiveness of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine in preventing infections and symptomatic illness but said it remained highly effective in preventing serious illness. The decline coincided with the spread of the Delta variant and the end of social distancing restrictions in Israel. Vaccine effectiveness in preventing both infection and symptomatic disease fell to 64% since June 6, the Health Ministry said. At the same time the vaccine was 93% effective in preventing hospitalizations and serious illness from the coronavirus.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/israel-sees-drop-pfizer-vaccine-protection-against-infections-still-strong-2021-07-05/>

COVID-19: UK seeing 'COVID Mexican wave' as virus spreads from west to east, says expert

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The UK is seeing its "own form of a COVID Mexican wave" as infections move from the west of the country to the east, a leading symptoms researcher has said. Professor Tim Spector, co-founder of the ZOE COVID symptom study, said areas in the west which have been worst affected are now seeing lower rates, suggesting they have reached the peak of infections. However, London, the South East, East Anglia and eastern parts of the country are seeing cases increase, according to data from his study.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-uk-seeing-mexican-wave-effect-as-infections-move-west-to-east-says-expert-12346989>

Will UK's rising Covid cases increase risk of vaccine-evasive variants?

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Covid cases in the UK are rising exponentially, largely in younger age groups who are more likely to

be partially or completely unvaccinated. What does this mean for the risk of new variants popping up?

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/05/will-uk-rising-covid-cases-increase-risk-of-vaccine-evasive-variants>

CDC launches investigation after healthy boy dies three days after receiving second Covid vaccine

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Jacob Clynick received his second dose of the vaccine in Milwaukee on June 13. Two days later, he complained of stomach ache and went to bed where he died. An autopsy was performed but cause of death has yet to be determined. CDC has launched an investigation into any link between his death and vaccine. Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been found to cause myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart, in extremely rare cases, most of which are not severe

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9756975/CDC-launches-investigation-healthy-boy-dies-three-days-receiving-second-Covid-vaccine.html>

Leaked memo raises Thai concern about Sinovac vaccine's efficacy

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A leaked health ministry document has prompted calls in Thailand for medical staff inoculated against COVID-19 to be given a booster of an mRNA vaccine, after it included a comment that such a move could dent public confidence in Sinovac Biotech's vaccine. The internal memo, which included various opinions, was reported by local media and shared widely on social media. It was confirmed by Thai Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul as being authentic.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/leaked-memo-raises-thai-concern-about-sinovac-vaccines-efficacy-2021-07-05/>

Ukraine approves Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine

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Ukraine has approved the COVID-19 vaccine developed by Johnson & Johnson, the health ministry said on Monday.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/ukraine-approves-johnson-johnson-covid-19-vaccine-2021-07-05/>

Staging Euro 2020 semis and final in London is 'recipe for disaster.' Is football -- and Covid-19 spike -- coming home?

Staging Euro 2020 semis and final in London is 'recipe for disaster.' Is football -- and Covid-19 spike -- coming home?

Coronavirus cases in Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East rose by 10% last week, World Health Organization Regional Director for Europe Hans Kluge told a press briefing in Copenhagen on Thursday. A 10-week decline in the number of Covid-19 cases in the 53-country region "has come to an end" Kluge said, with rising cases driven by increased socializing, travel, gatherings and easing of restrictions. Kluge said the situation and was "rapidly evolving" and warned that the Delta variant -- first identified in India -- is spreading at a fast pace, resulting in increased hospitalizations and deaths.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/07/04/football/euro-2020-semifinal-final-covid-19-uk-cmd-spt-intl/index.html>

Vaccinate or repent, Russian church says amid hundreds of daily COVID-19 deaths

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Russia's powerful Orthodox Church admonished people refusing to be vaccinated against COVID-19, calling them sinners who would have to atone for the rest of their lives, as the country reported another jump in new infections and deaths. The church urged all its faithful to be inoculated as

another 24,353 new COVID-19 cases were registered on Monday, including 6,557 in Moscow, taking the official national tally since the pandemic began to 5,635,294. The government coronavirus task force said 654 people had died of coronavirus-linked causes in the past 24 hours, pushing the national death toll to 138,579.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/vaccinate-or-repent-russian-church-says-amid-hundreds-daily-covid-19-deaths-2021-07-05/>

'Call of duty': Indonesian bikers brave COVID-19 surge to escort ambulances

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Indonesian volunteer biker Sebastian Dwiyanoro and his team have been particularly busy helping ambulances navigate heavy traffic in Jakarta's satellite city of Depok to get COVID-19 patients to hospital as infections soar in the country. The volunteers ride motorbikes in front of the ambulances, the deafening noise of the sirens behind them, freeing up space and stopping other cars to make way for ambulances carrying the sick to medical facilities or corpses to graveyards. Indonesia has been reporting more than 20,000 new cases and over 400 deaths per day over the past week as the spread of the more contagious Delta variant accelerated infections and strained the country's healthcare sector

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/call-duty-indonesian-bikers-brave-covid-19-surge-escort-ambulances-2021-07-05/>

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<https://apnews.com/article/indonesia-coronavirus-pandemic-health-b8d4f8e18a9b1569551b0ba12d385037>

Iran, facing another virus surge, reimposes restrictions and focuses on homegrown vaccines

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Iran on Sunday reimposed coronavirus restrictions amid fears that a fifth wave of the virus driven by the delta variant could overrun the country's health-care system, already battered by U.S. sanctions and the region's worst cycle of outbreaks. The latest surge comes as Iran has struggled to import vaccines, prompting the country's leaders to double down on researching and developing its homegrown vaccines.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/07/04/iran-coronavirus-surge-vaccines/>

The link between Covid-19 and hospitalisation has been 'weakened' in Wales, says health minister

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Wales' vaccination rollout has "weakened the link" between contracting coronavirus and hospitalisation, the health minister has confirmed. Eluned Morgan, speaking at the Welsh Government's press conference on Monday afternoon, said even the threat of the more transmissible Delta variant is not having a significant impact on hospital admission rates. Across

Wales the seven-day Covid infection rate has now risen to 95.6 cases per 100,000 people in Wales, with more people are coming forward for testing every day.

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/covid-vaccine-third-wave-delta-20971877>

Majority of Russians Still Not Ready for Covid-19 Vaccination - Poll

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A majority of Russian (54%) are still not ready to get vaccinated against the coronavirus despite a mounting surge driven by the highly contagious Delta variant, according to an independent poll published Monday. Russia set new records for coronavirus deaths for five consecutive days from June 29-July 3 as infections reached levels not seen since the peak of the country's second wave in early January. The spread of the Delta variant, which Moscow officials say accounts for 90% of the city's cases, has prompted several Russian regions to order compulsory vaccination for certain workers.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/07/05/majority-of-russians-still-not-ready-for-covid-19-vaccination-poll-a74426>