

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

20th May 2022

Lockdown Exit

Tea and infomercials: N. Korea fights COVID with few tools

"North Koreans know so many people around the world have died because of COVID-19, so they have fear that some of them could die, too," said Kang Mi-jin, a North Korean defector, citing her phone calls with contacts in the northern North Korean city of Hyesan. She said people who can afford it are buying traditional medicine to deal with their anxieties. Since admitting what it called its first domestic COVID-19 outbreak one week ago, North Korea has been fighting to handle a soaring health crisis that has intensified public anxiety over a virus it previously claimed to have kept at bay.

<https://apnews.com/4f4641bd167d728318fcafcf2bcc008b>

Shanghai Finds First Covid Cases Outside Quarantine in Six Days

Shanghai found the first cases of Covid-19 outside of quarantine in six days, raising questions about whether the easing of the city's lockdown will be impacted. Total infections in Shanghai rose to 858 on Thursday from 719 on Wednesday, with three of the cases found outside of government quarantine. Authorities started to ease the lockdown -- which had confined residents to their homes and curtailed business activity -- earlier this week after the city hit a milestone of three days of zero community transmission. However, many restrictions remain in place and swaths of the city's population are still largely stuck inside their compounds.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-05-20/shanghai-finds-first-covid-cases-outside-quarantine-in-six-days>

UK vaccine advisers eye autumn COVID boosters for over-65s

Britain's vaccine advisers on Thursday said that an anticipated autumn COVID booster campaign would be aimed at people aged over 65, care home residents, frontline health and social care workers and all adults in a clinical risk group. Britain is offering a spring booster to the over-75s, care home residents and immunosuppressed people, and ministers have spoken openly of plans for a further booster campaign in the autumn.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-vaccine-advisers-eye-autumn-covid-boosters-over-65s-2022-05-19/>

White House warns the US can't buy updated Covid-19 vaccines 'for every American who wants one' without more funding

White House Covid-19 coordinator Dr. Ashish Jha warned Wednesday that without more funding from Congress the US will not be able to buy enough Covid-19 vaccines for every American who wants an updated shot later this year. Scientists are working to develop new vaccines that would offer additional protection from infection and severe illness from new variants, including the possibility of a bivalent vaccine, a vaccine that would combine a currently approved vaccine with an Omicron-specific vaccine, for example. The US Food and Drug Administration could make a decision as soon as next month based on data from manufacturers Moderna and Pfizer for distribution in the fall.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2022/05/18/politics/white-house-covid-warning/index.html>

Taiwan firms resuming production in China as COVID curbs ease -minister

Roughly half of Taiwanese companies that had previously suspended work in China due to COVID-19 control measures have resumed production as curbs ease, the island's economy minister said on Thursday. Shanghai and neighbouring Kunshan, a hub for Taiwanese electronics makers including Apple supplier Quanta Computer, last month imposed stringent lockdowns to control the country's biggest COVID outbreak.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/taiwan-firms-resuming-production-china-covid-curbs-ease-minister-2022-05-19/>

COVID vaccine patents not discussed at G7 health ministers meeting

The question of COVID-19 vaccine patents was not discussed at a meeting of the health ministers of the Group of Seven (G7) countries in Berlin, German Health Ministers Karl Lauterbach said on Thursday. "We haven't discussed the release of patents because the question hasn't come up yet, but that can definitely happen," Lauterbach told a joint news conference with German Development Minister Svenja Schulze.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/covid-vaccine-patents-not-discussed-g7-health-ministers-meeting-2022-05-19/>

Germany's top court OKs vaccine mandate for health workers

Germany's top court said Thursday it has approved rules requiring health workers to be vaccinated against COVID-19. The Federal Constitutional Court announced that it had rejected complaints against the measure, arguing that the importance of protecting vulnerable people in hospitals and care homes outweighs any infringement of health workers' rights. The limited mandate came into effect in mid-March. The constitutional court had previously refused to issue an injunction blocking its implementation while it reached a final decision. Health Minister Karl Lauterbach welcomed Thursday's ruling, saying in a statement that "the state is obliged to protect vulnerable groups."

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-politics-health-germany-8b3412463cfbe9c2b48694e36372021c>

Shanghai to reopen subways in easing of COVID lockdown

The locked-down Chinese metropolis of Shanghai will reopen four of its 20 subway lines Sunday as it slowly eases pandemic restrictions that have kept most residents in their housing complexes for more than six weeks. The city will also restart 273 bus lines connecting major urban centers, airports, train stations and hospitals as it resumes cross-district public transit, Yu Fulin, director of the Shanghai Transport Commission, said at a daily pandemic briefing Thursday.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-politics-health-china-95b150e5e0c7738ce8cb53d82008b1e3>

N. Korea's low death count questioned amid COVID-19 outbreak

North Korea said Friday that nearly 10% of its 26 million people have fallen ill and 65 people have died amid its first COVID-19 outbreak, as outside experts question the validity of its reported fatalities and worry about a possible humanitarian crisis.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-health-epidemics-north-korea-6135c9f9c72536afb67f5f7ceb0569d7>

A third of US should be considering masks, officials say

COVID-19 cases are increasing in the United States — and could get even worse over the coming months, federal health officials warned Wednesday in urging areas hardest hit to consider reissuing calls for indoor masking. Increasing numbers of COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations are putting more of the country under guidelines issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that call for masking and other infection precautions. Right now, about a third of the U.S. population lives in areas that are considered at higher risk — mostly in the Northeast and Midwest. Those are areas where people should already be considering wearing masks indoors — but Americans elsewhere should also take notice, officials said.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-science-health-centers-for-disease-control-and-prevention-5bcd49eec7dab5832f2d98f4f9b22be7>

Exit Strategies

North Korea's suspected COVID-19 caseload nears 2 million

North Korea on Thursday reported 262,270 more suspected COVID-19 cases as its pandemic caseload neared 2 million — a week after the country acknowledged the outbreak and scrambled to slow infections in its unvaccinated population. The country is also trying to prevent its fragile

economy from deteriorating further, but the outbreak could be worse than officially reported since the country lacks virus tests and other health care resources and may be underreporting deaths to soften the political impact on authoritarian leader Kim Jong Un. North Korea's anti-virus headquarters reported a single additional death, raising its toll to 63, which experts have said is abnormally small compared to the suspected number of coronavirus infections.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-politics-health-pandemics-179729d42d62466acc3223dc2b43f0f2>

Germany's top court OKs vaccine mandate for health workers

The coronavirus pandemic is not over yet, Germany's health minister warned Thursday as the country's highest court approved rules requiring health workers to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Health Minister Karl Lauterbach noted the sharp rise in cases currently happening in some Asian countries, such as North Korea, but also parts of Europe. "In Germany, too, an average of 130 to 150 people are dying every day due to the pandemic," Lauterbach told reporters in Berlin. "So the impression that the pandemic has been defeated is wrong." Lauterbach was holding a two-day meeting with his counterparts from the Group of Seven leading democracies on Thursday and Friday.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-politics-health-germany-8b3412463cfbe9c2b48694e36372021c>

N.Korea claims 'good results' in COVID fight as fever cases top 2 million

North Korea said on Friday it was achieving "good results" in the fight against the country's first confirmed COVID-19 outbreak, as the number of people with fever symptoms surpassed 2 million. The isolated nation reported 263,370 more people with fever symptoms, and two more deaths, taking the total fever caseload to 2.24 million as of Thursday evening, including 65 deaths, according to state media KCNA. It did not report how many of those cases had tested positive for the coronavirus.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/nkorea-reports-263370-more-people-with-fever-symptoms-amid-covid-outbreak-kcna-2022-05-19/>

China's international schools hit by exodus of teachers dejected by COVID curbs

After teaching for three years at an international school in Shanghai, Michael is preparing to break his contract and leave, worn down by stringent measures against the coronavirus. Following two years of nearly-shut borders, onerous health checks and quarantine norms, a decision at the beginning of April to lock down China's commercial centre proved the last straw for the 35-year-old. "It has reached a point where the economic benefits of working here don't make up for the lack of freedom to come and go," the science teacher said, declining to give his full name for reasons of privacy.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/chinas-international-schools-hit-by-exodus-teachers-dejected-by-covid-curbs-2022-05-20/>

India has supplied COVID vaccines under Quad umbrella

India has supplied COVID-19 vaccines to Cambodia and Thailand under an initiative of the Quad group of countries, New Delhi said on Thursday, though not the Johnson & Johnson shot as originally planned. The leaders of the Quad countries - India, the United States, Japan and Australia - could discuss the vaccine supply plan when they meet in Japan on Tuesday, Indian foreign ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi told a news conference.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/india-has-supplied-covid-vaccines-under-quad-umbrella-2022-05-19/>

Some in Shanghai allowed out to shop; end of COVID lockdown in sight

More Shanghai residents were given the freedom to go out to shop for groceries for the first time in nearly two months on Thursday as authorities set out more plans for exiting the city-wide COVID-19 lockdown more fully. The commercial hub of 25 million recorded no new infections outside quarantined areas for a fifth day in a row, further cementing its "zero COVID" status with each day.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/some-shanghai-allowed-out-shop-end-covid-lockdown-sight-2022-05-19/>

China's zero-COVID policy dashes global hopes for quick economic return to normal

A sharp slowdown in China's economy caused by its strict zero-COVID rules and Beijing's shift away from a traditional reliance on external demand have cast doubts over how much the country will contribute to future global trade and investment. While China staged a remarkably quick recovery from its initial pandemic slump, thanks to bumper exports and factory production, analysts expect the current downturn will be harder to shake off than the one seen in early 2020

<https://www.reuters.com/business/chinas-zero-covid-policy-dashes-global-hopes-quick-economic-return-normal-2022-05-19/>

U.S. advisory panel to weigh in on COVID boosters for children

An advisory panel to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is meeting on Thursday to discuss whether to recommend COVID-19 vaccine booster shots for children ages 5 to 11, a group that is just 29% vaccinated so far. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorized booster doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for those children on Tuesday as COVID cases are on the rise again in the United States.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-advisory-panel-weigh-covid-boosters-children-2022-05-19/>

China slightly eases COVID test rules for travellers from U.K.

China removed on Thursday some COVID-19 test requirements for people flying in from Britain, part of changes to its draconian virus rules to better cope with a pandemic driven by the Omicron variant of the coronavirus. Travellers from Britain will no longer need to take a PCR test seven days before flying, and a requirements for an antibody test has also been scrapped, China's embassy in Britain said in a statement. However, travellers from Britain will still need to do two PCR tests within 48 hours of the departure of their flight to China, and a pre-flight rapid antigen test in some cases, the embassy said.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/china-slightly-eases-covid-test-rules-travellers-uk-2022-05-19/>

China removes some COVID test rules on travellers from U.S.

China has removed some COVID-19 test requirements for people flying in from countries such as the United States and shortened the pre-departure quarantine for some inbound travellers, as it fine-tunes measures to cope with the Omicron variant. From Friday, travellers from the United States will no longer need an RT-PCR test seven days before flying, according to notices from the Chinese embassy and consulates in the United States. Requirements for antibody tests have also been scrapped. Those travellers will still need to do two RT-PCR tests within 48 or 24 hours of their flights - depending on which airport they are flying out of - plus another pre-flight antigen test, the notices said.

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/travel/news/china-relaxes-some-covid-test-rules-for-us-other-travellers/ar-AAXrvdO>

Partisan Exits

Covid-19: Government failed to protect doctors during pandemic, BMA inquiry finds

The UK government failed in its duty of care to protect doctors and other healthcare staff from avoidable harm and suffering in its management of the covid-19 pandemic, a major review by the BMA has concluded. Two reports published on 19 May document the experiences of thousands of UK doctors throughout the pandemic, drawing on real time surveys carried out over the past two years, formal testimonies, data, and evidence sessions. The reports will form part of a wider review by the BMA into the government's handling of the pandemic, with three further instalments to come. The evidence lays bare the devastating impact of the pandemic on doctors and the NHS, with repeated mistakes, errors of judgment, and failures of government policy amounting to a failure of a duty of

care to the workforce, the BMA said.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/377/bmj.o1235>

UK's Johnson facing no further action over lockdown parties - BBC

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will not face any further action over rule-breaking parties held in Downing Street during the coronavirus pandemic, the BBC's political editor said on Twitter on Thursday. Johnson, who has previously apologised after receiving a fine, has dismissed calls to step down over gatherings held in his office and residence, an investigation into which has now been concluded by police

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uks-johnson-facing-no-further-action-over-lockdown-parties-bbc-2022-05-19/>

Scientific Viewpoint

U.S. expert panel backs COVID boosters for children 5 to 11

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Thursday recommended the COVID-19 vaccine booster for children ages 5 to 11 after an advisory panel voted to back them, at least five months after completing their primary vaccination course. CDC Director Rochelle Walensky said in a statement that she "endorsed" the vote by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices "to expand eligibility for COVID-19 vaccine booster doses. Children 5 through 11 should receive a booster dose at least 5 months after their primary series."

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-advisory-panel-weigh-covid-boosters-children-2022-05-19/>

Why isn't there a nasal vaccine for Covid-19 yet?

Covid-19 vaccines have rapidly altered our relationship with SARS-CoV-2, turning a dangerous infection into something akin to the common cold for many vaccinated people who contract it. But while these vaccines are great at protecting against severe illness and death, they cannot stop vaccinated people from contracting the virus and experiencing mild symptoms. If we want to prevent mild Covid infections, we're going to need vaccines that protect us where infections start: in the mucus membranes of the nose, mouth, and throat. And for that, we're likely going to need intranasal vaccines. A number of research groups and companies are working on Covid-19 vaccines that would be delivered intranasally, but the development process is tricky. Watch the explainer above to learn more.

<https://www.statnews.com/2022/05/19/intranasal-vaccine-covid19-explainer/>

Uzbekistan produces over 6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine

Uzbekistan has produced 6.172 million doses of ZF-UZ-VAC 2001 coronavirus vaccine. Since start of coronavirus pandemic, Uzbekistan received 69.7 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, including: - 2.6 million doses of AstraZeneca; - 48.1 million doses of ZF-UZ-VAC 2001; - 1.34 million doses of Sputnik V; - 10.68 million doses of Moderna; - 4.62 million doses of Pfizer/BioNTech; - 1.97 million doses of Sinovac; - 343,000 doses of Sputnik Light. More than 53 million doses of coronavirus vaccines were administered in Uzbekistan in total so far. 16.2 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines remain available.

https://akipress.com/news:671190:Uzbekistan_produces_over_6_million_doses_of_COVID-19_vaccine/

Coronavirus vaccine could have saved 319,000 people in U.S., study says

About a third of the 1 million lives lost to COVID-19 could have been saved with vaccines, a new analysis shows. Researchers at the Brown School of Public Health, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Microsoft AI for Health analyzed data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and The New York Times and came up with not only 319,000 needless deaths but also a state-by-state breakdown of where they could have been prevented. Between January 2021 and April 2022, about every second person who died from COVID-19 since vaccines became available might have lived if they had gotten the shots, the researchers found. Nationwide, about half of the 641,000 people who have died since vaccines

became available could have lived if every single eligible adult had gotten jabbed.

<https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/nation/coronavirus-vaccine-could-have-saved-319000-people-in-u-s-study-says/>

African J&J COVID vaccine orders mark a 'financial failure'

Late last year, Johnson & Johnson's COVID production partner Aspen Pharmacare touted the game-changing potential of its "monumental" licensing deal to make and sell J&J's single-dose shot in Africa. Five months later, and two months after Aspen started production, the effort has encountered a problem currently familiar to all pandemic vaccine manufacturers. Owing to a lack of demand—even in Africa where just 15.9% of the continent's 1.2 billion population has completed a coronavirus vaccination course—Aspen hasn't received a single order for its branded version of the J&J shot, Bloomberg reports. "There were a lot of calls both from the West and from Africa that the best way to try and solve the problem was to establish our own local vaccine production capacity," Stavros Nicolaou, Aspen's head of strategic trade, told the news outlet. The subsequent dearth of business "sends an incredibly bad message," he added.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/jjs-production-partner-aspen-no-orders-its-covid-19-shot-warns-lack-demand-sends-incredibly>

How many Australians have died from COVID-19? How many have had COVID?

COVID-19 infections in Australia hit worldwide highs last week, with infection rates per capita among the highest around the globe. As the United States officially reached the grim milestone of 1 million deaths from COVID-19 this month, the recent stats have left some of us asking — how does our own country stack up in comparison? Infections rose by more than 60% in the Middle East and 26% in the Americas, while deaths fell everywhere except Africa, where they jumped by nearly 50%. The COVID-19 figures reported to WHO do not include the recent outbreak figures announced by North Korea, which has yet to officially share requested data with the agency.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-05-19/how-many-australians-have-died-from-covid/101049296>

Trajectory of long covid symptoms after covid-19 vaccination: community based cohort study

The likelihood of long covid symptoms was observed to decrease after covid-19 vaccination and evidence suggested sustained improvement after a second dose, at least over the median follow-up of 67 days. Vaccination may contribute to a reduction in the population health burden of long covid, although longer follow-up is needed.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/377/bmj-2021-069676>

EU's drug regulator accepts Valneva's COVID-19 vaccine marketing authorization filing

The European Union's medicine regulator accepted Valneva's filing of marketing authorization application for its inactivated COVID-19 vaccine candidate, the French company said on Thursday. "The Company confirms it would expect to receive a positive CHMP opinion in June", Valneva said. Earlier this week, Valneva nearly a fifth of its value on the stock exchange after announcing its COVID-19 vaccine agreement with the European Commission was likely to be scrapped and it might have to rethink its financial guidance.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/eus-drug-regulator-accepts-valnevas-covid-19-vaccine-marketing-authorization-2022-05-19/>

WHO clears COVID vaccine by China's CanSino Biologics for emergency use

The World Health Organization on Thursday issued an emergency use listing for the single-dose COVID-19 vaccine from China-based CanSino Biologics. The vaccine, Convidecia, is the eleventh shot against the coronavirus to get clearance from the global health agency, whose advisory group recommended its use in people of age 18 years and above. The vaccine was found to have 64% efficacy against symptomatic disease and 92% against severe COVID-19, the agency said.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/who-clears-covid-vaccine-by-chinas-cansino-biologics-emergency-use-2022-05-19/>

Africa has contained monkey pox outbreaks during COVID pandemic - Africa CDC

Several outbreaks of monkey pox in Africa have been contained during the COVID pandemic while the world's attention was elsewhere, and outbreaks in Europe and the United States are a concern, Africa's top public health agency said on Thursday. A handful of cases of the virus, which causes fever symptoms and a distinctive bumpy rash, have been reported or are suspected in Britain, Portugal, Spain and the United States. The disease, which spreads through close contact and was first found in monkeys, mostly occurs in west and central Africa and only rarely spreads elsewhere. The acting director of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said that since 2020 outbreaks had been seen and contained in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Cameroon and Central African Republic.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/africa-has-contained-monkey-pox-outbreaks-during-covid-pandemic-africa-cdc-2022-05-19/>

COVID shows need for better information sharing early in pandemics, UK's Javid says

A lack of clear information out of China in the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic has left the whole world in a worse situation, British health minister Sajid Javid said. Javid, speaking before a G7 health ministers conference on Thursday where pandemic preparedness will be discussed, said that better information sharing would help avoid a repeat of the COVID crisis. He suggested that secrecy by China had contributed to a slow global response. Secretary of State for Health and Social Care's statement on the Ockenden Report.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/covid-shows-need-better-information-sharing-early-pandemics-uks-javid-says-2022-05-18/>

Vaccination after infection may curb long COVID; desktop 'air curtains' may deflect virus particles

The following is a summary of some recent studies on COVID-19. They include research that warrants further study to corroborate the findings and that has yet to be certified by peer review. Post-infection vaccination may reduce long COVID Vaccination after infection with SARS-CoV-2 may contribute to a reduction in the burden of long COVID symptoms, a new study suggests. Researchers tracked 6,729 volunteers ages 18 to 69, who got two shots of either AstraZeneca's viral vector vaccine or an mRNA vaccine from Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna after recovering from an infection with the coronavirus and who reported long COVID symptoms of any severity at least once between February and September 2021.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/vaccination-after-infection-may-curb-long-covid-desktop-air-curtains-may-deflect-2022-05-19/>

Autumn Covid Booster Recommended for Elderly, Vulnerable in UK

UK vaccine advisers recommended a new round of Covid boosters for elderly and vulnerable people in the fall, saying the pandemic's threat could mount again as winter approaches. Another shot should be offered to those 65 and older, care-home residents and staff, health and social workers, as well as people over 16 who are at higher risk, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunization said Thursday. The new campaign would follow spring boosters for a more limited population. Although the spread of the coronavirus has eased in the UK in recent weeks, new variants could emerge, and studies have shown that protection from vaccination wanes with time. Despite uncertainty surrounding potential future waves, the threat remains highest in winter, the committee said.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-05-19/autumn-covid-booster-recommended-for-elderly-vulnerable-in-uk>

Coronavirus Resurgence

COVID-19 deaths dropped by 21% last week but cases rising: World Health Organization

North Korea reported more than 2,62,000 more suspected cases on May 19, 2022, as its caseload approaches two million. The number of coronavirus deaths globally dropped by about 21% in the past week while cases rose in most parts of the world, according to the World Health Organization. In its weekly report on the pandemic released on May 19, the U. N. health agency said the number of new COVID-19 cases appears to have stabilised after weeks of decline since late March, with about 3.5 million new cases last week, or a 1% rise. WHO said cases increased in the Americas, Middle East, Africa and the Western Pacific, while falling in Europe and Southeast Asia. Some 9,000 deaths were recorded.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/covid-19-deaths-dropped-by-21-last-week-but-cases-rising-world-health-organization/article65430281.ece>

COVID-19 outbreak in 'mass spread' stage, to peak in late May: MOHW

Taiwan's COVID-19 outbreak has entered the "mass community spread" stage and is likely to reach a peak number of infections in late May, according to the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW). In a report to the Legislature Thursday, the ministry said Taiwan reported 475,497 new COVID-19 infections from May 12-18, marking "a significant increase" over the 302,597 cases recorded from May 5-11. The rising case numbers indicate Taiwan has entered the "mass community spread" stage of the disease, the ministry said, while noting that imported cases have dropped in the last week but "remain a risk."

<https://focustaiwan.tw/society/202205190013>

Portugal worries surge in COVID-19 cases may affect tourism

The increase in COVID-19 cases could affect the tourism and services sector's recovery, Economic Minister António Costa Silva said on Wednesday. "The virus can play more tricks on us, as it did before, and that is why it is very important to stress that the virus has not disappeared," Silva told journalists on the sidelines of a meeting with businesspeople in Aveiro. The minister argued that it is necessary to "continue to take all measures and do everything to contain this threat," warning that "the worst that can happen is to come out of one crisis and enter another, or worse than that, a cascade of crises that combine." This year, according to Silva, the government estimates that the tourism and services sector will generate €16 billion, which is only 85% of what was made in 2019.

https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short_news/portugal-worries-surge-in-covid-19-cases-may-affect-tourism/

On-campus COVID-19 measures couldn't contain Omicron

A study assessing Cornell University's COVID-19 surveillance and vaccination programs during the Omicron variant surge suggests that vaccination protected against severe infection, but it and other mitigation measures—including mass testing—didn't prevent rapid viral transmission. The study, published today in JAMA Network Open, describes the outcomes of the university's SARS-CoV-2 transmission-prevention programs implemented after the campus reopened for in-person instruction in fall 2021. Steps included mandatory vaccination for students, urging of vaccination for employees, and an on-campus mask requirement. In addition, isolation and contact tracing took place within hours of all COVID-19-positive tests.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2022/05/campus-covid-19-measures-couldnt-contain-omicron>

It's happening again: COVID-19 cases are back on the rise. There are 3 main reasons why.

COVID-19 infections continue to rise, driven by new and more infectious omicron subvariants, waning immunity from both vaccines and previous infections and fewer people masking up, health officials said at a White House briefing Wednesday. About a third of Americans now live in an area with medium or high COVID-19 rates, with reported cases up 26% from last week, said Dr. Rochelle

Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. On average, about 3,000 Americans are being hospitalized per day and 275 are dying. Walensky urged people in communities with higher infection and hospitalization rates to protect themselves by masking in indoor public places and to get a booster shot if vaccinated and to get vaccinated if they're not.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2022/05/18/omicron-waning-immunity-rising-covid-cases/9823740002/>

North Korea's suspected COVID-19 caseload nears 2 million

North Korea on Thursday reported 262,270 more suspected COVID-19 cases as its pandemic caseload neared 2 million — a week after the country acknowledged the outbreak and scrambled to slow infections in its unvaccinated population. The country is also trying to prevent its fragile economy from deteriorating further, but the outbreak could be worse than officially reported since the country lacks virus tests and other health care resources and may be underreporting deaths to soften the political impact on authoritarian leader Kim Jong Un.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-politics-health-pandemics-179729d42d62466acc3223dc2b43f0f2>

Biden Health Officials Warn of Substantial Increase in Virus Cases

Federal health officials warned on Wednesday that a third of Americans live in areas where the threat of Covid-19 is now so high that they should consider wearing a mask in indoor public settings. They cited new data showing a substantial jump in both the spread of the coronavirus and hospitalizations over the past week. Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said that the seven-day average of hospital admissions from Covid rose 19 percent over the previous week. About 3,000 people a day were being admitted with Covid, she said, although death rates, a lagging indicator, remained low.

<https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/18/world/covid-19-mandates-vaccine-cases>

Tea and infomercials: N. Korea fights COVID with few tools

On a recent nighttime visit to a drugstore, a double-masked Kim Jong Un lamented the slow delivery of medicine. Separately, the North Korean leader's lieutenants have quarantined hundreds of thousands of suspected COVID-19 patients and urged people with mild symptoms to take willow leaf or honeysuckle tea. Despite what the North's propaganda is describing as an all-out effort, the fear is palpable among citizens, according to defectors in South Korea with contacts in the North, and some outside observers worry the outbreak may get much worse, with much of an impoverished, unvaccinated population left without enough hospital care and struggling to afford even simple medicine.

<https://apnews.com/article/covid-health-south-korea-north-government-and-politics-4f4641bd167d728318fcafcf2bcc008b>