COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

28th Jun 2022

Lockdown Exit

Covid-19: UK makes first payments to compensate injury or death from vaccines

The first compensation payments in the UK have been made to families who have been bereaved, or to people who have been injured, as a result of a covid-19 vaccine. Vikki Spit from Cumbria is believed to be the first person to receive compensation, after her 48 year old partner, Zion, became ill eight days after receiving the AstraZeneca vaccine. Zion, a former rock singer, died at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle in May 2021. A handful of other people have received payments in the past few days under the government's vaccine damage payment scheme (VDPS), which pays out up to a maximum of £120 000 (€140 000; $150 000). Sarah Moore, a partner at the Hausfeld law firm, which is representing people seeking compensation, told The BMJ it was an important moment. "While the VDPS payments are very modest in amount, and will do very little to alleviate the financial difficulties with which many families are now struggling as a consequence of injury or bereavement, the fact of payment for some will mark a moment of vindication in that it is the clearest statement yet, by the government, that in some rare instances the covid-19 vaccines have caused very significant injury or death."

https://www.bmj.com/content/377/bmj.o1565

Shanghai will gradually resume dining-in at restaurants from June 29

Shanghai will gradually resume dining-in at restaurants from June 29 in low-risk areas and areas without any community-level spread of COVID-19 during the previous week□a Shanghai government official said on Sunday. The Chinese econonic hub lifted a two month city-wide lockdown on June 1, but many establishments have remained unable to offer indoor dining since mid-March. Shanghai reported no new locally transmitted cases - either symptomatic or asymptomatic - for June 24 and June 25.

https://www.reuters.com/world/china/shanghai-will-gradually-resume-dining-in-restaurants-june-29-2022-06-26/

Beijing to reopen schools, Shanghai declares victory over COVID

Beijing on Saturday said it would allow primary and secondary schools to resume in-person classes and Shanghai's top party boss declared victory over COVID-19 after the city reported zero new local cases for the first time in two months. The two major cities were among several places in China that implemented curbs to stop the spread of the Omicron wave during March to May, with Shanghai imposing a two month-long city-wide lockdown that lifted on June 1.

https://www.reuters.com/world/china/beijing-says-will-reopen-primary-secondary-schools-covid-cases-recede-2022-06-25/

Bereaved may take legal action against Government over coronavirus inquiry delay

Bereaved families have warned they may take legal action against the Government over delays to starting the coronavirus public inquiry. The Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice group is considering bringing a judicial review over the failure to provide a setting up date for the inquiry into the Government's handling of the pandemic. They say this leaves the inquiry in "limbo", more than six months after Prime Minister Boris Johnson appointed Baroness Hallett to chair the probe in December 2021.

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-06-26/bereaved-may-take-legal-action-against-government-over-coronavirus-inquiry-delay?srnd=premium-uk

No Government Money, No Problem for Moderna and Pfizer

A Food and Drug Administration committee will meet Tuesday to discuss how to move forward with the next generation of vaccines ahead of a booster campaign this fall. Paying for them is another matter. Congress has so far failed to approve additional funding for the shots—bad news for the U.S. population at large, but not bad at all for vaccine makers. They will just charge higher prices in the private market. The White House already is preparing to ration its vaccine supply to the most vulnerable Americans, according to White House coronavirus coordinator Dr. Ashish Jha. For Moderna, MRNA the first manufacturer to release data for an updated vaccine based on the Omicron variant of Covid-19, this could herald a new phase of the pandemic. “Either the government will find the money or we will go to the private market,” said Chief Executive Officer Stéphane Bancel in an interview. “There’s no way Moderna won’t be there for the U.S. booster campaign this fall.”

https://www.wsj.com/articles/no-government-money-no-problem-for-moderna-and-pfizer-11656327781

COVID-19: People in France 'should wear masks again on public transport' as new coronavirus wave hits nation

People in France should wear masks again in crowded areas, particularly if they are on public transport, to help tackle a new COVID-19 wave, according to the country's health minister. The increase in coronavirus cases is being fuelled by new variants, with 17,601 fresh infections over the past 24 hours - the highest Monday figure since 18 April. It comes as the number of people in England's hospitals who have tested positive for COVID jumped by more than a third in a week.

https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-people-in-france-should-wear-masks-again-on-public-transport-as-new-coronavirus-wave-hits-nation-12641476

UK Covid cases break 250,000 a day for first time since mid-April after BA.4 and BA.5 surge

Covid-19 cases have passed the 250,000-a-day mark in the UK, rising by 130 per cent in only three weeks. New daily cases are now at the highest level they have been for all but a month of the pandemic so far. That is an increase of 148,350 cases, or 130 per cent, in just over three weeks – putting rates well above any peak seen before 2022, although still some way behind the record of 349,011, on March 31 this year. New infection levels have only ever been above 250,000 a day in the UK between mid-March and mid-April this year. Scientists say the rapid growth of the new Omicron sub-variants BA.4 and BA.5 is the main driver of the increase. Daily symptomatic cases have more than doubled this month, rising from 114,030 on June 1 to 262,380 on Friday, according to the latest figures on the ZOE Covid Study app.

https://inews.co.uk/news/uk-covid-cases-break-250000-a-day-first-time-since-mid-april-omicron-surge-1707823

COVID an 'inconvenience' rather than 'life-threatening' for many now, says WHO

COVID is now an "inconvenience" for most people rather than "life-threatening", the World Health Organisation's special envoy on the virus has told Sky News. But concerns remain for those who are older and with health conditions, as well as the unvaccinated, warned Dr David Nabarro. He urged people to be "responsible" and continue to wear masks and social distance "to protect others" - as COVID cases continue to surge. Around 1.7 million people in the UK are estimated to have tested positive for the virus last week, up 23% from 1.4 million the previous week, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

https://news.sky.com/story/covid-an-inconvenience-rather-than-life-threatening-for-many-now-says-who-12641149

Covid-booster response hope for most vulnerable

More than a million vulnerable people could improve their protection against Covid by taking a short break from medication after a booster jab, a trial suggests. It found stopping the common immune-suppressing drug methotrexate for two weeks doubled spike antibody levels for up to 12 weeks. Some people experienced disease flare-ups but no impact on quality of life. Research is needed to

find out if a similar approach works for other drugs. Patients should always consult their doctor or specialist hospital team before pausing their medication, scientists writing in the Lancet Respiratory Medicine said.
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-61952752

Exit Strategies

Children to get free flu vaccines, second Covid-19 booster eligibility expanded

Health Minister Andrew Little said the government was expanding access to the flu vaccine after noticing an increase in pre-schoolers hospitalised with the illness. "We're making free flu shots available to another 800,000 New Zealanders, including children, more of whom are having to go to hospital," Little said. "Free flu shots are already available for everyone over the age of 65 and those at risk of becoming seriously ill or who have underlying conditions. "This season we ordered 40 per cent more vaccines. We've already seen more than one million New Zealanders get a flu shot, but with significant pressure on our health system we're ramping up efforts to get as many people vaccinated as possible."
https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/469830/children-to-get-free-flu-vaccines-second-covid-19-booster-eligibility-expanded

Kuwait mulls optional fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine

Kuwait is expected to soon introduce an optional fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine. According to local newspapers, the Ministry of Health is set to make an official statement on the availability of the fourth dose of the vaccine. The fourth dose, in accordance with regulations, will be provided to groups most vulnerable to infection, who are suffering from chronic diseases, elderly. The dose will be for those who wish to be vaccinated. The booster dose is given to avoid complications when infected. It is important to follow precautionary measures and continue to adhere to health instructionsm, the ministry reminded. The government in May announced the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. Travellers to the country are no longer needed to take a PCR test or provide proof of vaccination.
https://gulfnews.com/world/gulf/kuwait/kuwait-mulls-optional-fourth-dose-of-covid-19-vaccine-1.88874486

More free COVID-19 rapid tests for kids to be handed out in July

The government will provide more free COVID-19 rapid antigen tests in July for children under the age of 7 years, the Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC) said Monday. Starting July 1, families with children born on or after Sept. 2, 2015 will be eligible to collect the free tests at any of the approximately 5,000 designated pharmacies participating in the government's rapid test rationing program. Five free rapid tests will be allocated for each child in the under-7 age category, the CECC said, adding that parents must show the child's health insurance (NHI) card at the pharmacy. In the first round of free test distribution in June, some 780,000 families with children under the age of 7 years received free rapid test kits, accounting for 60 percent of the eligible age group, according to the CECC.
https://focustaiwan.tw/society/202206270012

Covid-19: Hong Kong extends social distancing rules to July 13, as experts call for border restrictions to be eased

Hong Kong’s current social distancing rules will be extended until July 13, the government has announced. “In view of the latest epidemic trend and given that the effective period of the measures in the coming cycle will span to the next government term, having consulted the Chief Executive-elect’s Office and with its consent, the Government decided to extend the existing social distancing measures for 14 days with effect from June 30,” the government said in a press release on Monday.
https://hongkongfp.com/2022/06/27/covid-19-hong-kong-extends-social-distancing-rules-to-july-13-as-experts-call-for-border-restrictions-to-be-eased/

Should you get a COVID-19 booster shot now or wait until fall? Two immunologists help weigh the options

While COVID-19 vaccines continue to be highly effective at preventing hospitalization and death, it has become clear that the protection offered by the current vaccines wanes over time. This necessitates the use of booster shots that are safe and effective in enhancing the immune response against the virus and extending protection. But when to get a first or second booster, and which shot to choose, are open questions. Many people find themselves unsure whether to wait on new, updated formulations of the COVID-19 vaccines or to mix and match combinations of the original vaccine strains. SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, uses its knob-shaped spike protein to gain entry into cells and to cause infection. Each of the existing and upcoming vaccines relies on emulating the spike protein to trigger the immune response. However, each vaccine type presents the spike protein to the immune system in different ways.

https://theconversation.com/should-you-get-a-covid-19-booster-shot-now-or-wait-until-fall-two-immunologists-help-weigh-the-options-184809

US Covid-19 vaccine rollout for under-fives must overcome hesitancy

For some American families, it was a much-anticipated and badly needed victory: Covid vaccines for children under five began rolling out in the US last week. “I’ve already been waiting a year and a half since I got my first dose, and that’s been intolerable,” says Dr Roby Bhattacharyya, an infectious diseases doctor at Massachusetts general hospital and parent of a four-year-old who received his first dose of the Pfizer vaccine on Tuesday. But others still have questions as America’s problem with vaccine hesitancy has not gone away. Less than one in five families want to get their children vaccinated as soon as possible, while the majority say they want to “wait and see” first. Only 18% of parents plan to have their children under five vaccinated right away, while 38% want to see how the vaccine rollout goes, according to an April survey from the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF). Another 11% say they will only get their kids vaccinated if they are required to, while 27% say they definitely won’t do it

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/26/us-covid-19-vaccine-under-fives

Casino hub Macau launches third round of COVID testing as infections rise

Macau launched a third round of mandatory COVID-19 testing for its more than 600,000 residents on Monday, in a push to curb a rise in infections in the world's biggest gambling hub. Authorities in Macau have locked down multiple buildings and put more than 5,000 people in quarantine in the past few days, the city's government said. Health authorities said 38 new COVID cases were recorded on Sunday, taking the total number of infections to 299 in the latest outbreak.

https://www.reuters.com/world/china/casino-hub-macau-launches-third-round-covid-testing-infections-rise-2022-06-27/

Warnings of mental health crisis among ‘Covid generation’ of students

The pandemic has had a lasting legacy on the mental health of the “Covid generation” of students, exacerbating rates of anxiety, depression and self-harm and resulting in a “significant rise” in young people struggling at university, experts have said. UK universities have reported that more students are experiencing mental health problems in the aftermath of the pandemic, and that this is expected to continue with the cohort arriving in September, whose school experience was heavily disrupted by the pandemic. The president of the National Union of Students, Larissa Kennedy, said she was “deeply concerned” by the student mental health crisis, which was “getting worse”, with NUS research suggesting “the majority of students are burdened by anxiety”.

https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/jun/28/warnings-of-mental-health-crisis-among-covid-generation-of-students

Partisan Exits

Legal challenge underway over Covid vaccine rollout for children

A judicial review of the Government's vaccine rollout for children aged 5-11 has begun today at the High Court in Wellington. A group of parents - all of whom have name suppression - are seeking a judicial review on the basis that the provisional consent process for the children's vaccine was flawed and illegal. They claim the Government cut corners in its decision to expand the rollout to children and ignored concerns about the adverse side effects of the vaccine.

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/covid-19-legal-challenge-underway-over-vaccine-rollout-for-children/RKCWXM2W5KUA6BDP6K4374BL3E/

Novak Djokovic won't get Covid vaccine to enter US Open

Novak Djokovic remains adamant he won't get vaccinated against Covid even if it means he misses the upcoming US Open later this year. The 35-year-old Serb missed the Australian Open after being deported for not having been vaccinated and will not be allowed to compete at the US Open for the same reason.

https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/tennis/novak-djokovic-covid-vaccine-us-open-b2110203.html

Censors delete discussion of Beijing's future COVID control

Digital censors quickly deleted a hashtag "the next five years" Monday as online discussion swirled in response to reported remarks of Beijing's Communist Party secretary saying that the capital city will normalize pandemic prevention controls over the course of the next five years. Beijing's Communist Party chief, Cai Qi, made the remarks Monday morning as part of a report on the Party's management of the city. The citywide party congress is held once every five years, ahead of the national level party congress, which is slated for this fall. At the congresses, members generally review the work of the past five years while also announcing goals for the next five years. "In the next five years, Beijing will resolutely, unremittingly, do a good job in normalizing pandemic prevention controls," according to a cached version of the remarks in Beijing Daily, the main Communist Party mouthpiece in the capital city.

https://apnews.com/article/covid-health-taiwan-government-and-politics-56cf9189c7de31279ab30d20a3fbceda

Scientific Viewpoint

Epstein-Barr may play a role in some long COVID; coronavirus can impair blood sugar processing by organs

Among 280 patients with SARS-CoV-2 infections, including 208 with long COVID, researchers found that at four months after diagnosis, fatigue and problems with thinking and reasoning were more common in study participants with immune cells in their blood showing signs of recent EBV reactivation. These signs of reactivation were not linked with other long COVID findings such as gastrointestinal or heart and lung problems, however. And EBV itself was not found in patients' blood, which suggests any reactivation likely is transient and happens during acute COVID-19, Dr. Timothy Henrich of the University of California, San Francisco and colleagues reported on medRxiv ahead of peer review.

https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/epstein-barr-may-play-role-some-long-covid-coronavirus-can-impair-blood-sugar-2022-06-27/

Pfizer and BioNTech share positive results for Omicron-adapted COVID-19 vaccine

Pfizer and BioNTech have shared positive results from a phase 2/3 trial of two Omicron-adapted COVID-19 vaccine candidates. The data shows that a booster dose of both Omicron-adapted vaccines gave a considerably higher immune response against Omicron BA.1, compared to Pfizer/BioNTech's current COVID-19 vaccine. The phase 2/3 trial involved 1,234 participants aged 56 and older. One month after receiving a booster dose, the Omicron-adapted monovalent candidates significantly increased protection against Omicron BA.1, showing a 13.5 and 19.6-fold increase above pre-booster dose levels. One vaccine is monovalent and the other is bivalent, made up from a

combination of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine and a vaccine candidate designed to target the spike protein of the Omicron BA.1 variant.
https://www.pmlive.com/pharma_news/pfizer_and_biontech_share_positive_results_for_omicron-adapted_covid-19_vaccine_1450591

EMA recommends Novavax COVID vaccine for adolescents
EU Reporter publishes articles from a variety of outside sources which express a wide range of viewpoints. The positions taken in these articles are not necessarily those of EU Reporter.
https://www.eureporter.co/health/coronavirus/2022/06/27/ema-recommends-novavax-covid-vaccine-for-adolescents/

China's first mRNA vaccine is close — will that solve its COVID woes?
China is getting closer to approving its first mRNA vaccine to protect people against COVID-19. In a small clinical trial, the Chinese vaccine candidate triggered a stronger antibody response in vaccinated adults when given as a booster shot than did a jab containing inactivated SARS-CoV-2, the vaccine platform that the country has mostly relied on so far. The experimental jab, called ArCoV, is a strong candidate to become China's first approved mRNA vaccine. But what it would mean for the government's handling of the pandemic is hard to know, say researchers. A highly effective mRNA vaccine would reduce the chances of widespread serious infections that could overwhelm hospitals. However, it is unlikely to bring an end to the country's strict 'zero COVID' strategy, which uses mass testing and lockdowns to quash all infections.
https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-01690-3

F.D.A. May Move Toward Updating Vaccines
A panel of independent experts advising the Food and Drug Administration is set to recommend on Tuesday whether to update existing Covid-19 vaccines to target a newer version of the coronavirus in a booster shot that Americans could get in the fall. The federal government is hoping to improve the vaccine to better boost people's immunity before a likely resurgence of the virus this winter. But to move that quickly, it may need to abandon the lengthy human trials that have been used to test coronavirus vaccines over the past two years in favor of a faster process that relies more on laboratory tests and animal trials. The most recent trials with human volunteers have taken five months, even using relatively small groups. But the virus is evolving so quickly that new vaccine formulations are out of date before such trials are even finished.
https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/27/us/fda-booster-covid-vaccine.html

Long Covid 2: supporting the mental and physical needs of patients
Long Covid is a multi-system condition affecting both the body and the mind that occurs in some people as a lingering consequence of a Covid-19 infection (Maxwell et al, 2022). As described in our first article in this series, symptoms are diverse and many post-Covid-19 sequelae present as undifferentiated symptoms not apparent on routine investigation (Maxwell et al, 2022). This can contribute to patients' symptoms not always being taken seriously by health professionals. Lack of clarity over the mechanisms for long Covid means opinion can be polarised, with some practitioners believing all symptoms are physical and others that they are purely psychological. In truth, there is ample evidence that long Covid is a combination of physical and mental symptoms, many of which are undifferentiated and common in established physical and psychological conditions. Individual prognosis for individuals is hard to assess, with some people recovering within months but others still having problems after two years.
https://www.nursingtimes.net/clinical-archive/long-term-conditions/long-covid-2-supporting-the-mental-and-physical-needs-of-patients-27-06-2022/

BioNTtech in conflict with regulator over new COVID vaccine approval - WAS
The launch of German drugmaker BioNTech's vaccine adapted to the Omicron coronavirus variant may be delayed due to a disagreement with the regulator over the approval process, the Welt Am

Sonntag (WAS) newspaper reported on Saturday. The regulator should still decide by the end of June whether or not to approve the new vaccine but BioNTech Chief Executive Ugur Sahin does not plan to submit any new clinical trials, WAS reported, citing the Financial Times.
https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/biontech-conflict-with-regulator-over-new-covid-vaccine-approval-was-2022-06-25/

Sinovac's COVID-19 vaccine conditionally registered in South Africa
China's Sinovac Biotech said on Saturday that South Africa's health products regulator has granted conditional registration to its coronavirus vaccine CoronaVac for people aged 18 and above.
https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/sinovacs-covid-19-vaccine-conditionally-registered-south-africa-2022-06-25/

China's Clover says its COVID booster shot candidate lifts antibody against Omicron
China's Clover Biopharmaceuticals said on Monday a booster shot of its COVID-19 vaccine candidate significantly increased antibody response against the Omicron coronavirus variant from levels seen after two primary shots. A third dose of its vaccine candidate SCB-2019 resulted in a 19-fold increase in neutralising antibody levels against the Omicron BA.2 subvariant from pre-booster levels, Clover said in a filing to the Hong Kong stock exchange.
https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/chinas-clover-says-its-covid-booster-shot-candidate-lifts-antibody-against-2022-06-27/

US grapples with whether to modify COVID vaccine for fall
U.S. health authorities are facing a critical decision: whether to offer new COVID-19 booster shots this fall that are modified to better match recent changes of the shape-shifting coronavirus. Moderna and Pfizer have tested updated shots against the super-contagious omicron variant, and advisers to the Food and Drug Administration will debate Tuesday if it’s time to make a switch — setting the stage for similar moves by other countries. “This is science at its toughest,” FDA vaccine chief Dr. Peter Marks told The Associated Press, adding that a final decision is expected within days of the advisory panel’s recommendation.
https://apnews.com/article/covid-science-politics-health-467a8ff92896625d2892a61b1a603bce

FDA panel to advise on whether — and how — Covid vaccines should be updated
The Food and Drug Administration faces an important decision in coming days — whether to instruct companies that make Covid-19 vaccines to update the viral strain or strains of SARS-CoV-2 those products target. It seems almost a given that the FDA will tell manufacturers that it is time to change the composition of Covid vaccines, with an eye to a rollout of updated vaccines to be administered in the autumn. But how and to what are questions that still need answering. The agency is seeking the advice of its independent panel of vaccine experts, the Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee, or VRBPAC, to help it decide how, in the words of senior FDA official Peter Marks, to predict the future. VRBPAC meets Tuesday to discuss the issue.
https://www.statnews.com/2022/06/27/fda-panel-to-advise-on-whether-and-how-covid-vaccines-should-be-updated/

Pfizer says its Omicron-containing boosters outperform current vaccine
Pfizer said Saturday that using new versions of its Covid-19 vaccine as boosters led to a superior antibody response against the Omicron variant compared to its current shot. The results in some ways mirror those released by Moderna earlier this month. Data from both companies will be evaluated on Tuesday by a panel of experts convened by the Food and Drug Administration in the hopes of deciding what strains of the SARS-Cov-2 virus should be included in booster shots for the fall. Companies will need lead time to manufacture doses of new vaccines if it is decided they are needed.
https://www.statnews.com/2022/06/25/pfizer-says-its-omicron-containing-boosters-outperform-current-vaccine/

Coronavirus Resurgence

Lebanon faces new wave of Covid; health ministry urges public to get shots

The Lebanese Ministry of Public Health warned on Saturday that the country is facing a new wave of COVID-19, urging the public to get vaccinated as soon as possible. The warning was issued in a statement by the ministry after its Vaccine Executive Committee held an emergency meeting on the latest epidemiological developments, the Lebanese National News Agency reported. "We are facing a new wave of the coronavirus, which is expected to be more contagious and the fastest spreading, according to the infection figures in Lebanon and in the rest of the world, which are experiencing an alarming rise," the statement said.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/lebanon-faces-new-wave-of-covid-health-ministry-urges-public-to-get-shots-122062600056_1.html

Covid in Scotland: public told to act over new Covid-19 surge

The use of facemasks in crowded places and staying away from work or school if infected are “small prices to pay” to reduce the latest spike in Covid-19 cases, Scotland’s national clinical director has said. Professor Jason Leitch said that mandatory restrictions to curb the rise were unnecessary because of the vaccination programme, recently developed antiviral drugs and increased knowledge among the public of how to protect themselves.

https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/covid-in-scotland-public-told-to-act-over-new-covid-19-surge-blmb535d2

COVID-19's sixth wave hits Palestinian Territories

In a press statement sent to The New Arab, the ministry said it reported more than 1,000 new cases infected with the deadly coronavirus in the West Bank in a single day. The Ramallah-based Palestinian Health Ministry announced on Monday that the sixth wave of the coronavirus has hit the region. In a press statement sent to The New Arab, the ministry said it reported more than 1,000 new cases infected with the deadly coronavirus in the West Bank in a single day. Mai al-Kaila, the health minister, expressed her concerns about the current health situation, urging the public to immediately receive booster vaccinations and abide by precautionary and preventive measures. The Palestinian minister warned that its ministry may call on local authorities to impose several strict measures to curb the virus's spread.

https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/covid-19s-sixth-wave-hits-palestinian-territories

Peru facing fourth wave of COVID-19: government

Peru's government on Sunday declared that a fourth wave of COVID-19 infections had begun to hit the country, which has one of the highest mortality rates from the virus in the world. "We are currently in a fourth wave, as we have seen the increase (of cases)... in different provinces of our country, such as Junin, Arequipa, Cusco and the capital," Health Minister Jorge Lopez told local broadcaster RPP radio. According to official figures, infections increased from 1,800 per week at the beginning of the month to more than 11,000 in the last week.

https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-06-peru-fourth-covid-.html

China reports 106 new COVID cases for June 26 vs 116 day earlier

Mainland China reported 106 new coronavirus cases for June 26, of which 39 were symptomatic and 67 were asymptomatic, the National Health Commission said on Monday. That compared with 116 new cases a day earlier - 39 symptomatic and 77 asymptomatic infections, which China counts separately. There were no new deaths, keeping the nation's fatalities at 5,226. As of Sunday, mainland China had confirmed 225,565 cases with symptoms.

https://www.reuters.com/world/china/china-reports-106-new-covid-cases-june-26-vs-116-day-earlier-2022-06-27/

Pakistan orders masks on domestic flights as COVID numbers rise

Pakistan’s aviation regulator has made masks mandatory on domestic flights given a gradual rise in

the number of COVID-19 cases across the country, it said a statement. The order comes a day after Pakistan's biggest city, Karachi, reported that its COVID-19 positivity ratio, or the rate of positive cases out of all tests conducted, rose to 21% compared with a national rate of 2.8%. "With immediate effect, mask wearing will be mandatory onboard domestic flights," the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) said in the statement late on Sunday.
https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/pakistan-orders-masks-domestic-flights-covid-numbers-rise-2022-06-27/