

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 6th May 2021

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### Overnight NewsRoundUp

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#### **U.S. will back proposal to waive intellectual property rights and boost COVID-19 vaccine production**

- In a significant move to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, **the U.S. government agreed to support a controversial proposal to temporarily waive intellectual property rights for vaccines in a bid to increase global supplies of desperately needed doses.**
- The proposal, which was first introduced before the World Trade Organization last fall by South Africa and India, would cover patents, industrial designs, copyrights, and protection of trade secrets. [Ultimately, a waiver would make it easier for countries that permit compulsory licensing to allow a manufacturer to export vaccines.](#) The move came amid growing concern that low and middle income countries were being left out after wealthy nations reached deals with vaccine makers.
- **'This is a global health crisis, and the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic call for extraordinary measures. The administration believes strongly in intellectual property protections, but in the service of ending this pandemic, supports the waiver of those protections for COVID-19 vaccines,'** said U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai in a statement. She added the administration will 'actively participate in text-based negotiations at the World Trade Organization needed to make that happen,' but cautioned that 'those negotiations will take time.'

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In a significant move to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, the U.S. government agreed to support a controversial proposal to temporarily waive intellectual property rights for vaccines in a bid to increase global supplies of desperately needed doses. The proposal, which was first introduced before the World Trade Organization last fall by South Africa and India, would cover patents, industrial designs, copyrights, and protection of trade secrets. Ultimately, a waiver would make it easier for countries that permit compulsory licensing to allow a manufacturer to export vaccines. The move came amid growing concern that low and middle-income countries were being left out after wealthy nations reached deals with vaccine makers.

<https://www.statnews.com/pharmalot/2021/05/05/biden-covid19-vaccine-patent-rights/>

#### **US backs waiving COVID vaccine property rights**

Today the Biden administration said it supports an initiative to waive the intellectual property protections for COVID-19 vaccines. A statement from United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai said, "The Administration believes strongly in intellectual property protections, but in service of ending this pandemic, supports the waiver of those protections for COVID-19 vaccines." The statement was made during talks at the World Trade Organization's (WTO's) general council meeting. The proposal was first floated last fall, but many wealthy countries opposed it. The WTO will require unanimous agreement on the temporary waiver of property rights, and is expected to

formally vote on the issue in June. Proponents of the waiver say it will be in place for a handful of years, until the pandemic is under control.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/05/us-backs-waiving-covid-vaccine-property-rights>

### **U.S. reverses stance, backs giving poorer countries access to COVID vaccine patents**

President Joe Biden on Wednesday threw his support behind waiving intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines, bowing to mounting pressure from Democratic lawmakers and more than 100 other countries, but angering pharmaceutical companies. Biden voiced his support for a temporary waiver - a sharp reversal of the previous U.S. position - after a speech at the White House, followed swiftly by an official statement from his chief trade negotiator, Katherine Tai.

[https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/biden-says-plans-back-wto-waiver-vaccines-2021-05-05/?taid=609324a2c73c08000194bcb3&utm\\_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm\\_medium=trueAnthem&utm\\_source=twitter](https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/biden-says-plans-back-wto-waiver-vaccines-2021-05-05/?taid=609324a2c73c08000194bcb3&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter)

### **Biden move on vaccine IP 'monumental moment' in COVID-19 fight -WHO chief**

The head of the World Health Organization said on Wednesday that U.S. President Joe Biden's plan to back a proposed waiver on intellectual property rights to boost global vaccine production was a "monumental moment in the fight against #COVID-19." Biden earlier on Wednesday threw his support behind a proposed World Trade Organization waiver of intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines, bowing to mounting pressure from U.S. Democratic lawmakers and more than 100 other countries.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/biden-move-vaccine-ip-monumental-moment-covid-19-fight-who-chief-2021-05-05/>

### **US supports vaccine patent waiver proposal at World Trade Organization**

The Biden administration, in a major decision Wednesday, said it would support easing patent rules on Covid-19 vaccines after intense internal debate and strong pushback from American drugmakers, potentially expanding the global supply and narrowing the vaccination gap between rich and poor nations. The move is preliminary and will not guarantee the global patent rules are lifted right away. But the Biden administration's signal of support amounts to a major step that aid groups and Democrats had been pressing for. "The Administration believes strongly in intellectual property protections, but in service of ending this pandemic, supports the waiver of those protections for COVID-19 vaccines," US Trade Representative Katherine Tai wrote in a statement.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/05/05/politics/vaccine-patent-waivers/index.html>

### **Global economy rests on cutting vaccine inequity: US trade chief**

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United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai says that making vaccines more widely available throughout the world is needed to end the coronavirus pandemic and foster economic recovery. In remarks to a Council of the Americas conference on Tuesday, Tai said the world had made real strides towards ending the pandemic but that a lot of work lies ahead. "That includes making the vaccine widely available and addressing the global inequity in vaccine access," she said. "This is not just a public health requirement. Our economic recovery depends on it." Tai is due to discuss demands from developing countries for a World Trade Organization (WTO) waiver of intellectual property rights on coronavirus vaccines during a WTO General Council meeting later this week.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2021/5/5/global-economy-rests-on-cutting-vaccine-inequity-us-trade-chief>

### **Covid vaccine patent scandal will prolong pandemic, says Stephen Reicher**

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The manufacturers of coronavirus vaccines have condemned millions to death with patents that prevent developing countries from copying their formula, a government adviser has said. Professor

Stephen Reicher, a member of the UK government's scientific advisory group for emergencies (Sage), said that vaccine patents were "a vast scandal" that were prolonging the pandemic throughout the world. The latest figures suggest Scotland has recorded 139 new cases of coronavirus but no deaths. The daily test positivity rate was 1.1 per cent, down from 1.5 per cent the previous day, data released by the Scottish government yesterday showed.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/covid-vaccine-patent-scandal-will-prolong-pandemic-says-stephen-reicher-2m8dvt7f0>

### **Pharmaceutical association says Biden move on COVID-19 vaccine patent 'wrong answer'**

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The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations said on Wednesday that U.S. President Joe Biden's support for waiving patents of COVID-19 vaccines was "the wrong answer" to a complex problem and called for more technology transfer agreements. The Geneva-based IFPMA, which represents research-based pharmaceutical companies, said in a statement: "Waiving patents of COVID-19 vaccines will not increase production nor provide practical solutions needed to battle this global health crisis. On the contrary, it is likely to lead to disruption."

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/pharmaceutical-association-says-biden-move-covid-19-vaccine-patent-wrong-answer-2021-05-05/>

### **Time for the ethical management of COVID-19 vaccines**

#### **Time for the ethical management of COVID-19 vaccines**

The ethical distribution of life-saving medical and public health interventions to vulnerable groups has often been overlooked. Valuation of life linked to an individual's country of origin, the pharmaceutical industry's prioritisation of profit, the exploitation of vulnerable groups in clinical trials, and the resulting hesitancy towards drugs and vaccines have, among other factors, made the human right to health unattainable for many people. The COVID-19 pandemic presents itself as an opportunity to reverse this long-standing trajectory of unethical practices in global health. By ensuring the ethical inclusion of vulnerable groups in the vaccine development process and making a safe, effective vaccine accessible to all, pharmaceutical companies, governments, and international organisations can usher in a new era of global health that relies solely on ethical decision making.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(21\)00180-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(21)00180-7/fulltext)

### **Reintroduction of COVID measures**

#### **Seychelles reintroduced Covid-19 measures despite being the most vaccinated nation in the world**

There are 1,068 active cases in Seychelles, the world's most vaccinated nation. However, 35 percent of them are among people who have been given two doses. Seychelles is using a combination of AstraZeneca and China's Sinopharm jab. Health officials offered little explanation as to why cases are still surging

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9544921/Seychelles-reintroduced-Covid-19-measures-despite-vaccinated-nation-world.html>

#### **Red Cross sounds alarm over Nepal's COVID-19 crisis**

As neighboring India's massive surge continues, health groups warn of a similar situation evolving in Nepal, where the military is adding hospital beds and COVID-19 outbreaks have reached some Mount Everest base camps. The World Health Organization (WHO) said yesterday in its weekly snapshot of the pandemic that Nepal's cases last week rose by a staggering 137%. Meanwhile, officials warned that parts of the Americas are still in the thick of the pandemic, with severe cases trending younger.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/05/red-cross-sounds-alarm-over-nepals-covid-19-crisis>

### **'Human catastrophe' as India's COVID-19 surge spreads to Nepal**

Nepal is being overwhelmed by a COVID-19 surge as India's outbreak spreads across South Asia, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said on Wednesday. "We need to act now and we need to act fast to have any hope of containing this human catastrophe. This virus has no respect for borders and these variants are running rampant across Asia," said Alexander Matheou, Asia Pacific director for the Geneva-based agency representing the global humanitarian network.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/human-catastrophe-indias-covid-19-surge-spreads-nepal-2021-05-05/>

### **Thailand fights to contain COVID-19 surge in Bangkok**

Health officials rushed to vaccinate thousands of people in Bangkok's biggest slum on Wednesday as new COVID-19 cases spread through densely populated low-income areas in the capital's central business district

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/thailand-fights-to-contain-covid19-surge-in-bangkok-thailand-covid-astrazeneca-china-sinovac-b1842336.html>

### **Malaysia imposes restrictions in capital as virus cases rise**

Malaysia on Wednesday imposed movement restrictions in the capital Kuala Lumpur due to a rising number of COVID-19 infections, adding to lockdowns that have been implemented across the country. The capital will be subjected to some lockdown measures from Friday for two weeks, including a ban on social activities, dining indoors, and inter-district travel, Defence Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob said in a statement. Several parts of the surrounding Selangor state, Malaysia's richest region, will also go into lockdown later this week.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/malaysia-imposes-restrictions-capital-virus-cases-rise-2021-05-05/>

### **Egypt to close stores, restaurants early for 2 weeks to curb COVID-19**

The closing hours of Egyptian stores, malls and restaurants will be brought forward to 9pm (1900 GMT) to help contain the coronavirus for two weeks from Thursday, straddling the last days of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and Eid celebrations, the prime minister said on Wednesday. Large gatherings and concerts will be banned over the same period and beaches and parks will be shut between May 12-16, Mostafa Madbouly said.

<https://nationalpost.com/pm/health-pmn/egypt-to-close-stores-restaurants-early-for-2-weeks-to-curb-covid-19>

## **COVID-19: Booster jab rollout ready from the autumn - but which vaccine to give?**

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### **Tweaked Moderna vaccine 'neutralises Covid variants in trials'**

The first "tweaked" vaccine against the worrying coronavirus variants that emerged in South Africa and Brazil has successfully neutralised them in laboratory trials, the US company Moderna has said. The results of the small trial suggest that boosters against the variants will be feasible and could be rolled out this year to counter the threat from variants that have appeared around the world and are feared in some cases to be more transmissible or partially vaccine-resistant. Leading companies have been racing to produce adapted versions of their Covid vaccines. Pfizer/BioNTech, which has a similar mRNA vaccine to Moderna's, and Oxford/AstraZeneca are also in the process of developing tweaked vaccines against the South African variant, B1351, and the Brazilian variant, P1, which appear to be the major threat to current immunisation programmes.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/05/tweaked-moderna-vaccine-neutralises-covid-variants-in-trials>

### **Moderna booster increases antibodies against COVID-19 variants, early data shows**

Moderna Inc said on Wednesday early human trial data shows that a third dose of either its current COVID-19 shot or an experimental new vaccine candidate increases immunity against variants of COVID-19 first found in Brazil and South Africa. The booster shots, given to volunteers previously

inoculated with Moderna's two-dose vaccine regimen, also boosted antibodies against the original version of COVID-19, Moderna said. The early data comes from a 40-person trial testing both Moderna's existing shot and a version developed to protect against the South African variant of COVID-19 called mRNA-1273.351. Moderna is also studying a shot that combines both the new and existing vaccine.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/moderna-booster-increases-antibodies-against-covid-19-variants-early-data-shows-2021-05-05/>

### **Booster shots rev up immune response to coronavirus variants, Moderna says**

A booster shot of Moderna's coronavirus vaccine revs up the immune response against two worrying coronavirus variants, the company reported Wednesday. And a booster dose formulated specifically to match the B.1.351 variant first seen in South Africa was even more effective, Moderna said in a statement. Vaccine makers are trying to get out ahead of the new variants and the design of the new mRNA vaccines made by Moderna and Pfizer make this easier than it would have been in the past. The genetic material used as the basis of the vaccines is made in a lab and the sequence is easily tweaked.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2021/05/05/health/vaccines-efficacy-coronavirus-variants-reports/index.html>

### **COVID-19: Booster jab rollout ready from the autumn - but which vaccine to give?**

With the vaccine rollout going so well and daily deaths dwindling to single figures, the challenge now is how to future-proof our shield against the virus - and prevent the need for another lockdown. The Chief Medical Officer has been signalling since the start of the year that booster doses are likely to be given to the vulnerable in the autumn. And Vaccines Minister Nadhim Zahawi told Sky News: "We want them to be able, if they need to, from September onwards to boost those that are most vulnerable".

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-booster-jab-rollout-ready-from-the-autumn-but-which-vaccine-to-give-12297383>

### **Third coronavirus vaccine could be offered to people over 50 before winter**

A third jab could be offered to those over 50 before winter in bid to stop the threat of coronavirus in the UK by Christmas, it is understood. People could receive a vaccine specifically modified to tackle new variants of the Covid, or a third shot of the three vaccines already in use. That's according to the Times, which said trials of these two options are under way and being supervised by England's chief medical officer Chris Whitty.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/third-coronavirus-vaccine-could-be-offered-to-over50s-before-winter-b933267.html>

## **Vaccine Deliveries and Manufacturing**

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### **White House to shift COVID-19 vaccine to states with more need**

COVID-19 vaccine doses allocated to a U.S. state but left unordered will become available to other states under a policy shift aimed at delivering vaccines to where they are most in demand, the White House said on Tuesday. Vaccines have been allocated state by state based on population - a formula the Biden administration held to even as some states such as Michigan saw increases in coronavirus infections.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/biden-administration-shift-covid-19-vaccine-states-with-more-need-report-2021-05-04/>

### **Egypt to receive 4.9 million coronavirus vaccine doses in May: health minister**

Egypt will receive a total of 4.9 million coronavirus vaccine doses this month, Health Minister Hala Zayed said on Wednesday, amid Egypt's suffering from a surge in coronavirus cases. Zayed said 1.7 million coronavirus doses will arrive in Egypt in the coming week and 1.7 million doses will arrive by the end of May through the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX). Also, one million doses of

the Chinese Sinopharm vaccine are set to arrive this month in addition to 500,000 doses of the Chinese Sinovac through this week. As Egypt is preparing to locally produce the Sinovac vaccine, Zayed said Egypt will soon receive 1,400 liters of the raw material needed to manufacture 2 million vaccine doses.

<https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/1/102627/Egypt-to-receive-4-9-million-coronavirus-vaccine-doses-in>

### **Iraq pushes vaccine rollout amid widespread apathy, distrust**

Iraq's vaccine roll-out had been faltering for weeks. Apathy, fear and rumors kept many from getting vaccinated despite a serious surge in coronavirus infections and calls by the government for people to register for shots. It took a populist Shiite cleric's public endorsement of vaccinations — and images of him getting the shot last week — to turn things around. Hundreds of followers of Muqtada al-Sadr are now heading to clinics to follow his example, underscoring the power of sectarian loyalties in Iraq and deep mistrust of the state. "I was against the idea of being vaccinated. I was afraid, I didn't believe in it," said Manhil Alshabli, a 30-year-old Iraqi from the holy city of Najaf. "But all this has changed now." "Seeing him getting the vaccine has motivated me," said Alshabli, speaking by phone from Najaf where he and many other al-Sadr loyalists got their shots, Alshabli compared it to soldiers being energized when they see their leader on the front line.

<https://apnews.com/article/middle-east-iraq-coronavirus-pandemic-lifestyle-coronavirus-vaccine-04dad2124d94b9d4d1281b391c4157d0>

### **Vaccine Approval for Kids**

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#### **Canada authorizes Pfizer vaccine for age 12 and older**

Canadian health officials said Wednesday they have become the first to approve Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine for ages as young as 12. Dr. Supriya Sharma, chief medical adviser at Health Canada, confirmed the decision for ages 12 to 15 and said it will help children return to a normal life. Canada is the first country to authorize Pfizer for that age group. The U.S. and the European Union are also reviewing it. The vaccine was previously authorized for anyone 16 or older. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is also expected to authorize Pfizer's vaccine for young people by next week, setting up shots for many before the beginning of the next school year. The announcement comes barely a month after the company found that its shot, which is already authorized for those age 16 and older, also provided protection for the younger group.

<https://apnews.com/article/canada-coronavirus-pandemic-health-336429c4aea3d258d14d49e656cb5bd5>

#### **COVID-19: US President Joe Biden expects Pfizer vaccine to be approved for 12 to 15-year-olds**

US President Joe Biden said the government is gearing up to give the coronavirus vaccine to 12 to 15-year-olds. Mr Biden announced the next phase in America's vaccine rollout and said that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is expected to approve the Pfizer jab for children as young as 12. All of the current vaccines are authorised for use in people over 16 in America. The president also laid out plans to vaccinate 70% of American adults - a total of 160 million - by 4 July.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-us-president-joe-biden-expects-pfizer-vaccine-to-be-approved-for-12-to-15-year-olds-12297347>

#### **US parents excited over prospect of virus shots for children**

After more than a year of fretting over her 13-year son with a rare liver disease, Heather Ousley broke into tears when she learned that he and millions of other youngsters could soon be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. "This day is the best day in the history of days!!! I love this day!!!" she texted, joining other parents and educators in welcoming the news that the Food and Drug Administration is expected to authorize Pfizer's vaccine by next week for children ages 12 to 15. Ousley, president of the school board for the 27,000-student Shawnee Mission School District in Kansas, plans to get her 13- and 15-year-olds promptly vaccinated and then celebrate with ice

cream. They have been learning from home with their younger brother since the start of the outbreak.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-lifestyle-coronavirus-vaccine-education-health-868b5ee6ad28bb42aee3f06324937384>

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### **UK pledges £29m more to fast-track vaccines against Covid variants**

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The UK government is pledging extra money to fast-track vaccines in an effort to stay “one step ahead” of coronavirus variants. The multimillion-pound investment in testing facilities at Porton Down in Wiltshire would help to “future-proof” the country, said the health secretary, Matt Hancock. The government is pledging an additional £29.3m, on top of £19.7m already promised. Scientists at the Porton Down research laboratory test blood samples to monitor the effectiveness of coronavirus vaccines. Current testing capacity is 700 tests a week, but it is increasing to 1,500 by January 2022.

[https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/05/uk-pledges-millions-bolster-testing-coronavirus-variants-porton-down?utm\\_term=Autofeed&CMP=tw\\_t\\_gu&utm\\_medium&utm\\_source=Twitter#Echobox=1620205471](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/may/05/uk-pledges-millions-bolster-testing-coronavirus-variants-porton-down?utm_term=Autofeed&CMP=tw_t_gu&utm_medium&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1620205471)

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### **Some data lacking in China Covid-19 vaccine assessments: WHO group**

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Advisory group assesses vaccines by Sinopharm and Sinovac Biotech ahead of their evaluation for WHO emergency authorisation. Concern that not enough data is available about effects of these vaccines on elderly and medically vulnerable patients

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3132249/coronavirus-fuller-picture-chinese-vaccine-data-who-group-finds>

#### **WHO experts voice "very low confidence" in some Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine data**

WHO experts have voiced "very low confidence" in data provided by Chinese state-owned drugmaker Sinopharm on its COVID-19 vaccine regarding the risk of serious side-effects in some patients, but overall confidence in its ability to prevent the disease, a document seen by Reuters shows. A World Health Organization spokesman said that the document on Sinopharm vaccine BBIBP-CorV was "one of many resources" on which recommendations are made, tentatively scheduled to be issued later this week. In Beijing, Sinopharm was not immediately reachable for comment outside working hours

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/exclusive-who-experts-voice-very-low-confidence-some-sinopharm-covid-19-vaccine-2021-05-05/>

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### **Germany looks to loosening lockdown as COVID-19 cases fall**

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Parts of Germany are eyeing a loosening of lockdown restrictions as the number of new cases fell nationwide on Wednesday, though infection rates remain high in some of the 16 federal states. Confirmed new coronavirus cases in Germany rose on Wednesday by 18,034 to 3,451,550, but that 24-hour figure was 4,000 lower than a week ago, and the seven-day incidence per 100,000 people dropped to 132 from 141 on Tuesday, the lowest in three weeks.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/germany-looks-loosening-lockdown-covid-19-cases-fall-2021-05-05/>

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### **New COVID-19 infections in France slow down further**

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The number of daily new COVID-19 infections in France slowed again on Tuesday, continuing a three-week trend, with the week-on-week increase in cases below 3% for the third day in a row. The health ministry reported 24,371 new cases, taking the total to 5.68 million, an increase of 2.64% from last Tuesday and down from week-on-week increases of more than 6% before and during the third lockdown in April. After the first strict lockdown in spring 2020, week-on-week increases fell

below 2% in June and remained below 3% until the end of July.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/france-reports-243-new-coronavirus-deaths-hospitals-2021-05-04/>

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## **COVID's US toll projected to drop sharply by the end of July**

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Teams of experts are projecting COVID-19's toll on the U.S. will fall sharply by the end of July, according to research released by the government Wednesday. But they also warn that a "substantial increase" in hospitalizations and deaths is possible if unvaccinated people do not follow basic precautions such as wearing a mask and keeping their distance from others. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention paper included projections from six research groups. Their assignment was to predict the course of the U.S. epidemic between now and September under different scenarios, depending on how the vaccination drive proceeds and how people behave. Mainly, it's good news. Even under scenarios involving disappointing vaccination rates, COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths are expected to drop dramatically by the end of July and continue to fall afterward.

<https://apnews.com/article/centers-for-disease-control-and-prevention-epidemics-las-vegas-mass-shooting-coronavirus-pandemic-science-10bb5a6b734675fa735986d30ad1e43d>

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## **Philippines approves emergency use of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine**

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The Philippines' food and drug agency approved on Wednesday the emergency use of U.S. drugmaker Moderna Inc's (MRNA.O) COVID-19 vaccine in the Southeast Asian nation. The known and potential benefits of Moderna outweighed the known and potential risks, Food and Drug Administration chief Rolando Enrique Domingo said during an online forum, adding it would be administered to individuals aged 18 and above.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/philippines-approves-emergency-use-modernas-covid-19-vaccine-2021-05-05/>

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## **India approves Roche/Regeneron antibody cocktail to treat COVID-19**

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India has given emergency use authorization for a COVID-19 antibody drug cocktail developed by Roche (ROG.S) and Regeneron (REGN.O), expanding its arsenal of drugs to battle a massive second wave of infections. The decision was taken based on data filed with the U.S. regulators and the scientific opinion of a European regulatory panel, Roche's India distribution partner for the drug, Cipla (CIPL.NS), said on Wednesday. The therapy is a cocktail of two antibodies Casirivimab and Imdevimab, which are synthetically manufactured copies of antibodies that the body produces after an infection.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/india-approves-rocheregeneron-drug-covid-19-2021-05-05/>

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## **Covid Forecasters Warn India Deaths May Double in Coming Weeks**

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The coronavirus wave that plunged India into the world's biggest health crisis has the potential to worsen in the coming weeks, with some research models projecting that the death toll could more than double from current levels. A team at the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore used a mathematical model to predict about 404,000 deaths will occur by June 11 if current trends continue. A model from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington forecast 1,018,879 deaths by the end of July.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-05-04/covid-forecasters-warn-india-deaths-may-double-in-coming-weeks>

**'Sari is my mask': How the COVID pandemic has hit India's poorest**

Weakened by fever and gasping for breath, 47-year-old Vinod Kumar died in an ambulance more than 60km (35 miles) from his home in India's eastern Bihar state, far from the big cities at the centre of the nation's devastating COVID-19 crisis. His death last week followed a frantic journey and dozens of phone calls by desperate relatives in search of a hospital bed and oxygen supplies, as a nationwide surge in coronavirus cases exposes the limitations of health facilities in the countryside. "We admitted him wherever we found a bed. It was a nursing home but wasn't functioning like one. Patients were getting their own oxygen," said Kameshwar Kumar, Vinod's brother. "The hospital was rationing its oxygen supply to patients and my brother was sinking so we were forced to rush him to another hospital but he didn't make it," Kumar told Reuters news agency by telephone, crying as he spoke.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/5/sari-is-my-mask-how-the-pandemic-has-hit-indias-poorest>

### **As COVID-19 rages in India, scientist warns further waves 'inevitable'**

India's coronavirus deaths rose by a record 3,780 during the last 24 hours, a day after the country became the world's second, after the United States, to cross the grim milestone of 20 million infections. Daily infections rose by 382,315 on Wednesday, health ministry data showed.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-india/india-posts-record-daily-rise-in-coronavirus-deaths-idUSFWN2MR1AB>

### **Coronavirus: How India descended into Covid-19 chaos**

On Monday, a senior official from India's federal government told journalists that there was no shortage of oxygen in Delhi or anywhere else in the country. As he spoke, several small hospitals - only a few miles from where he stood in the capital - were sending out desperate messages about them running out of oxygen, putting patients' lives at risk. The chief doctor of one of the hospitals - a specialist paediatric facility - told the BBC that "our hearts were in our mouths" because of the risk of children dying. They got supplies just in time, after a local politician intervened.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-56977653>

### **India is suffering immensely under the weight of Covid. Now its failures are threatening much of the world**

The lesson from India's Covid-19 vaccine sagas is stark and simple: Can India be considered a reliable supplier of vaccines during the next pandemic? The country's reputation as the "pharmacy of the developing world" is taking a beating thanks to its vaccine heist and rickety regulatory capacity. Who will trust a country that blocked the export of paid-for vaccines in the middle of a pandemic? The owner of SII, who will probably be sued for breach of contract by multiple parties, has already announced it will set up manufacturing facilities outside India — a sign for the rest of the world of the Indian government's missteps in managing this pandemic. Could there be a worse fall from grace for a country whose prime minister was boasting just a few months ago of saving the rest of the developing world?

<https://www.statnews.com/2021/05/05/india-vaccine-heist-shoddy-regulatory-oversight-imperil-global-vaccine-access/>

### **India says UK COVID-19 variant cases declining, local variant up in some states**

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### **India says UK COVID-19 variant cases declining, local variant up in some states**

India has seen fewer cases of infections by the coronavirus variant first spotted in Britain in recent weeks but more by a local variant in some states, Sujeet Kumar, the director of the National Centre for Disease Control, said on Wednesday.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/india-says-uk-covid-19-variant-cases-declining-local-variant-up-some-states-2021-05-05/>

### **Kenya reports COVID-19 variant detected in India - health ministry**

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A variant of COVID-19 first diagnosed in India has been detected in Kenya, the health ministry said on Wednesday, days after the same variant was detected in neighbouring Uganda. The health ministry last week said Kenya was suspending flights to and from India.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/kenya-reports-covid-19-variant-detected-india-health-ministry-2021-05-05/>

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### **Novavax vaccine shows 51% efficacy against South African variant, study finds**

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Novavax Inc's COVID-19 vaccine had efficacy of 51% against infections caused by the South African variant among people who were HIV negative, and 43% in a group that included people who were HIV positive, according to a new analysis published on Wednesday. The variant, known as B.1.351, carries mutations that threaten the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines, several studies have shown. Most vaccine makers, including Novavax, are testing versions of their vaccines to protect against emerging variants.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/novavax-vaccine-shows-43-efficacy-against-south-african-variant-study-finds-2021-05-05/>

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### **Denmark, Norway study finds slightly raised blood clot rates after Astra COVID shot**

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A study in Denmark and Norway has found slightly increased rates of vein blood clots among people who have had a first dose of AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine, including clots in the brain, compared with expected rates in the general population. Researchers who conducted the study stressed, however, that such side effects are extremely rare, and the benefits of the vaccine still outweigh the risks in most situations.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/denmark-norway-study-finds-slightly-raised-blood-clot-rates-after-astra-covid-2021-05-05/>

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### **S.Korea says AstraZeneca, Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines 87% effective after first shot**

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Data by the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency (KDCA) showed the Pfizer vaccine, jointly developed by BioNTech, was 89.7% effective in preventing infection at least two weeks after a first dose was given, while the AstraZeneca shot was 86.0% effective. Its analysis is based on more than 3.5 million people in South Korea aged 60 and older for two months from Feb. 26 and included 521,133 people who received a first dose of either Pfizer or AstraZeneca shot.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/skorea-says-astrazeneca-pfizer-covid-19-vaccines-87-effective-after-first-shot-2021-05-05/>

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### **Eli Lilly faces employee complaints, FDA troubles at factory making COVID-19 drug: report**

#### **Eli Lilly faces employee complaints, FDA troubles at factory making COVID-19 drug: report**

Quality control problems have already plagued one COVID-19 vaccine manufacturer in Baltimore, Maryland. Now, it appears they're threatening to trip up a major pandemic therapeutic supplier as well. Eli Lilly employees have accused an executive at the drugmaker's Branchburg, New Jersey, manufacturing site of altering FDA-required documents in an effort to downplay serious quality control problems, Reuters reported on Wednesday, citing internal complaint documents and a source familiar with the matter. The complaint, dated April 8, said the executive tasked with quality controls rewrote findings from Lilly's technical experts at the facility, which produces doses of the company's COVID-19 antibody treatment bamlanivimab, in order to make them look more favorable, according to the report.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/eli-lilly-faces-employee-complaints-fda-troubles-at-factories-making-covid-19->

[drug-report](#)