

Herd immunity unachievable!

CNN ONLINE

Spain's large-scale study on the coronavirus indicates just 5% of its population has developed antibodies, strengthening evidence that a so-called herd immunity to Covid-19 is "unachievable," the medical journal the Lancet reported on Monday.

The findings show that 95% of Spain's population remains susceptible to the virus. Herd immunity is achieved when enough of a population has become infected with a virus or bacteria -- or vaccinated against it -- to stop its circulation.

The European Center for Disease Control told CNN that Spain's research, on a nationwide representative sample of more than 61,000 participants, appears to be the largest study to date among a dozen serological studies on the coronavirus undertaken by European nations.

It adds to the findings of an antibody study involving 2,666 participants in Geneva, Switzerland, published in the Lancet on June 11.

There have been similar studies in China and the United States and "the key finding from these representative cohorts is that most of the population appears to have remained unexposed" to Covid-19, "even in areas with widespread virus circulation," said a Lancet commentary published along with Spain's findings.

"In light of these findings, any proposed approach to achieve herd immunity through natural infection is not only highly unethical, but also unachievable," said the Lancet's commentary authors, Isabella Eckerle, head of the Geneva Centre for Emerging Viral Diseases, and Benjamin Meyer, a virologist at the University of Geneva.

Doctors are uncertain whether having antibodies to the coronavirus means someone cannot be infected again. It's not clear how long or how well antibodies protect people from the virus.



A local resident reacts as he stands amid debris of a friend's home in Hitoyoshi, Kumamoto prefecture, southern Japan, in this photo taken by Kyodo, yesterday. Japan warned of more heavy rain on the southwestern island of Kyushu and bolstered rescue operations as the death toll in flood-hit areas rose past 50 with about a dozen people reported missing. PHOTO: REUTERS

UK imposes sanctions against rights abusers

Two top Myanmar generals, 25 Russians, 20 Saudis among 49 individuals and organisations targeted

AGENCIES

Britain has identified 49 "notorious" individuals and organisations, 25 of them Russian, 20 Saudi and two top Myanmar generals, to be sanctioned under its first post-Brexit targeting of accused human rights violators, prompting immediate anger from Moscow.

Min Aung Hlaing, the commander-in-chief of the Burmese military and his deputy, Soe Win are the two persons named in the report for human rights abuses against the Rohingya people and other ethnic minorities.

A 2017 military crackdown in Myanmar drove more than 730,000 Rohingya Muslims to flee to neighbouring Bangladesh. United Nations investigators have said Myanmar's operation included mass killings, gang rapes and widespread arson and was executed with "genocidal intent."

The Russians are listed for their alleged involvement in the death of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky and the Saudis for suspected roles in the death of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the Foreign Office said.

One notable name on the list is Saud al-Qahtani, who it is believed oversaw the team that killed Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Turkey in 2018.

Individuals from North Korea were also included on the list and all those named will have their UK assets frozen and travel bans imposed.

It is the first time Britain has gone it

alone and used sanctions to penalise individuals and organisations accused of human rights abuse.

The new measures were announced by Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab in a statement to the House of Commons.

Raab said: "Today this Government and this House sends a very clear message on



Min Aung Hlaing

behalf of the British people that those with blood on their hands, the thugs of despots, the henchmen of dictators will not be free to waltz into this country to buy up property on the King's Road, to do their Christmas shopping in Knightsbridge or frankly to siphon dirty money through British banks or other financial institutions."

Those targeted would be those not just committing human rights abuses but anyone who profited from them, Raab said.

The decision drew a furious reaction from Russia which said it "reserves the right to take retaliatory measures".

US to force out int'l students taking classes fully online

REUTERS, New York

Foreign students must leave the United States if their school's classes this fall will be taught completely online or transfer to another school with in-person instruction, the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency announced on Monday.

ICE said students under the above mentioned criteria potentially face deportation proceedings.

Colleges and universities have begun to announce plans for the fall 2020 semester amid the continued coronavirus pandemic. Harvard University on Monday announced it would conduct course instruction online for the 2020-2021 academic year.

The ICE guidance applies to holders of F-1 and M-1 visas, which are for academic and vocational students.

UN blames human behaviours for pandemics

Urges governments to protect environment to prevent future animal-to-human diseases

AGENCIES

The world is seeing a rise in diseases passed from animals to humans like the coronavirus, the United Nations has warned, calling on governments to take active measures to prevent future pandemics.

In a new report released on Monday, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) jointly identified seven trends responsible for such diseases, known as zoonotic. These include rising demand for animal protein, extraction of natural resources and urbanisation, intensive and unsustainable farming, exploitation of wildlife, increased travel and transportation, food supply changes and climate change.

"The science is clear that if we keep exploiting wildlife and destroying our ecosystems, then we can expect to see a steady stream of these diseases jumping from animals to humans in the years ahead," UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen said in a statement.

The new coronavirus, which is most likely to have originated in bats, has infected more than 11 million people and killed at least half a million people globally. But it is just one in a growing number of diseases - including Ebola, MERS, West Nile fever, Zika, SARS and Rift Valley fever - that have jumped from animal hosts into the human population in recent years, said the report.

About 60 percent of known infectious diseases in humans and 75 percent of all emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic, according to the UNEP, largely due to the increased interaction between humans, animals and the environment.

"According to UNEP, about two million people, mostly in developing nations, die from neglected zoonotic diseases every year. In the last two decades alone, zoonotic diseases have caused economic losses of more than \$100bn. This does not include the cost of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is expected to reach \$9 trillion over the next few years, said the report.

World sees warmest June

Temperatures soared 10 degrees Celsius above average in June across much of permafrost-laden Siberia, with last month in a dead heat for the warmest June on record globally, the European Union's climate monitoring network Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said yesterday. Freakishly warm weather across large swathes of Siberia since January combined with low soil moisture, have contributed to a resurgence of wildfires that devastated the region last summer, C3S reported. Both the number and intensity of fires in Siberia and parts of Alaska have increased since mid-June, resulting in the highest carbon emissions for the month - 59 million tonnes of CO2 - since records began in 2003.

'Surge' in Gaza suicides

At least 17 people have taken their own lives in the impoverished Gaza Strip this year and hundreds more have made suicide attempts, a Palestinian rights group said Monday. Israel has imposed a stifling land, sea and air blockade on the Gaza Strip for over a decade, after having withdrawn from the densely populated enclave in 2005. Activists say "extreme poverty," difficult living conditions and a lack of freedom of expression were all factors behind these suicides. According to the United Nations, unemployment before the spread of the coronavirus stood at around 43 percent of Gaza's estimated two million inhabitants, while 80 percent depended on aid to survive.

China signs UN arms trade treaty

China signed a global pact Monday to regulate arms sales that has been rejected by the United States, the Asian power's UN ambassador said. The statement added that Beijing allows arms exports only to sovereign states and not to non-state actors. China, the second-largest global arms producer, announced June 22 it would join the Arms Trade Treaty, which now has 107 member states and designed to control the flow of weapons into conflict zones. Adopted by the UN in 2013, the treaty requires members to keep records of international transfers of weapons and to prohibit cross-border shipments that could be used in human rights violations. The arms included range from handguns to missiles to airplanes and warships.

US killing of top Iran' general 'unlawful': UN expert



The US drone strike that killed Iran's top general Qasem Soleimani was "unlawful", the United Nations expert on extrajudicial killings concluded in a report released yesterday. Agnes Callamard, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, concluded it was an "arbitrary killing" that violated the UN charter. The US had provided no evidence that an imminent attack against US interest was being planned, she wrote. The independent rights expert does not speak for the United Nations but reports her findings to it. US President Donald Trump ordered the killing of Soleimani in a January 3 drone strike near Baghdad international airport. Iraqi commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis was also killed in the drone strike.

SOURCE: ANN, REUTERS, AFP



Protesters hold up blank papers in response to a new national security law in Hong Kong, yesterday.

NEW SECURITY LAW IN HONG KONG

Tech giants resist 'internet curbs'

REUTERS, New York/Hong Kong

Chinese-owned social media platform TikTok yesterday announced it would pull out of Hong Kong within days, as global tech giants struggle to figure out how to operate in the city under sweeping new security rules imposed by Beijing.

Major US internet companies including Facebook, Microsoft, Google, Twitter and Zoom have all announced they have suspended the processing of requests for user data from the Hong Kong authorities while they study the new law.

The US companies' social media platforms are generally banned in China, where access is blocked by Beijing's "great firewall". Most have operated freely in Hong Kong, but will now have to determine how to comply with new rules for the city, which rights groups say threaten freedoms enjoyed for decades.

Facebook, which also owns WhatsApp and Instagram, said in a statement on Monday it was pausing reviews of user data requests for all of its services "pending further assessment of the National Security Law."

Google and Twitter said they had suspended their reviews of data requests from Hong Kong authorities immediately after the law went into effect last week. Zoom and Microsoft's LinkedIn issued similar statements yesterday.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Monday Washington was considering banning TikTok in the United States. Asked if Americans should download it, he told Fox News: "Only if you want your private information in the hands of the Chinese Communist Party."

China's parliament passed the national security legislation last week, setting the stage for the most radical changes to the former British colony's way of life since it returned to Chinese rule 23 years ago.

Hong Kong late on Monday published more details about how the new law will strengthen police powers over the internet, including the ability to ask publishers to remove information deemed a threat to national security.

Asked about the moves by the US tech firms, Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam told a news conference yesterday: "Ultimately, time and facts will tell that this law will not undermine human rights and freedoms."

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges
Road Transport and Highways Division

Road Safety Management and Capacity Building Project

Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority

Nagar Bhaban (Level 14-15), Fulbaria, Dhaka

Memo No. 35.02.0000.002.14.006.2020-19

Date: 07 July 2020

Invitation for Proposal for Staff Outsourcing Through Firm/Company for RSMCB Project-DTCA

1. Ministry/Division	:	Road Transport and Highways Division.
2. Executing agency	:	Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority.
3. Procuring entity	:	Project Director-RSMCB Project-DTCA.
4. Invitation Ref No.	:	Memo No. 35.02.0000.002.14.006.2020-19
5. Invitation date	:	07 July 2020
6. Invitation for	:	Proposal for Staff Outsourcing [Physical Services].
7. Source of budget	:	Govt. fund.
8. Procurement method	:	Open NCB (Least Cost Selection).
9. Project name	:	Road Safety Management and Capacity Building Project.
10. Package No.	:	RSMCB Project NSI.
11. Package name	:	Staff Outsourcing for RSMCB Project-DTCA.
12. Last date for proposal selling	:	22 July, 2020 (during office hour).
13. Last date for proposal submission	:	23 July 2020 at 12:00 Noon (Bangladesh Standard Time).
14. Eligibility of the applicant	:	Any reputed Bangladeshi firm having at least two years of experience of providing the physical services mentioned below (or relevant positions) to any government/non-government office/project or any NGO/consulting firm. The firm shall have at least five years of general experience of providing physical service. Other eligibility criteria are stated in the Proposal Document.
15. Brief description of the service to be provided	:	To provide Staff Input for the post of 02 (Two) Office Assistant-Cum-Computer Operator and 02 (Two) Office Assistant (MLSS) for the Office of the Project Director.
16. Contract period	:	11 months (approx).
17. Address of selling proposal document	:	Office of the Project Director, RSMCB Project, Room No. 1440, Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka-1000.
18. Address of receiving proposal document	:	Office of the Project Director, RSMCB Project, Room No. 1440, Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka-1000.
19. Proposal price	:	A non-refundable amount of Taka 1000/- (one thousand) in cash.
20. Name of the officer inviting proposal	:	Mohammad Mamunur Rahman.
21. Designation of the officer inviting proposal	:	Project Director.
22. Contact details	:	Phone: +88-02-47120832, E-mail: enrgmmr@rsmcb.gov.bd

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and the whole process.

Project Director
Road Safety Management and Capacity Building Project
Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA)

Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka

GD-1099