

THE TIMES



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Bringing up baby

Life with a newborn in No 10 by Alice Thomson



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FACUNDO ARRIZABALAGA/EPA



It's a boy Boris Johnson's fiancée, Carrie Symonds, gave birth to their son yesterday. The prime minister was present during the delivery before returning to work

'Four-hour wait to board flights' after pandemic

Graeme Paton Transport Correspondent

Air passengers could face four-hour waits to board planes, inflated ticket prices and a dramatically reduced schedule in the future, analysts have said.

The flight experience would be "very uncomfortable" after lockdown, with pre-pandemic levels of service unlikely for up to five years, they predicted.

It is widely expected that some form of health screening will be demanded before and after passengers fly to prevent a second wave of the virus.

One expert said that four-hour waits before departures could be expected, up from one or two now, as medical tests were added to the normal pre-flight ritual of check-in, security, passport control and boarding.

It is also likely that social distancing will be maintained on aircraft, with warnings that as few as 20 per cent of seats may be filled to keep passengers at least two metres apart.

Another analyst said that budget airlines typically had to fill at least 80 per cent of seats to break even, so passengers could expect a big increase in prices. Unprofitable routes will be abolished.

The news came as Wizz Air said that passengers would be required to wear facemasks when it becomes the first airline to resume commercial flights out of Britain tomorrow. In-flight magazines will be removed. It will operate 15 routes from Luton airport to destinations including Budapest, Lisbon and Tenerife.

Lufthansa, the German carrier and Europe's biggest airline, said that all passengers would have to wear a mask or scarf covering their noses and mouths on planes and in airports from Monday.

Air travel has been almost stopped by the coronavirus pandemic, with the Foreign Office advising against all but essential flights. Latest figures from Eurocontrol, which co-ordinates air traffic across the Continent, show that flights in and out of Britain on Tuesday were 91 per cent lower than the same day last year.

Airlines are facing an unprecedented fight for survival. Virgin Atlantic is seeking a £500 million government loan amid warnings that it could go bust. British Airways announced that up to 12,000 staff, a quarter of its workforce, could be made redundant.

As carriers emerge from the crisis, it is likely that the travel landscape will be changed in terms of cost, route availability, the number of airlines and the flight experience. Ministers are considering a compulsory two-week quarantine for anyone entering the country.

Andrew Charlton, managing director
Continued on page 2, col 3

Drugs trial gives hope for treatment of virus

● Global study sees patient recovery time reduced ● Britain's death toll increases to more than 26,000

Tom Whipple Science Editor

A drug has been shown to treat coronavirus for the first time, cutting the number of days patients take to leave hospital by almost a third.

Remdesivir, an antiviral originally designed to combat ebola, had a "clear cut significant positive effect in diminishing time to recovery," Anthony Fauci, a leading member of the US coronavirus task force, said.

Announcing the results of the keenly awaited trial at a press conference alongside President Trump, Dr Fauci said that the success was "a very important proof of concept". He added: "What it has proven is that a drug can block this virus."

The results were a surprise because the drug had appeared to fail in previous smaller studies. The new data, which was drawn from a global trial of 1,096 patients, including some in Britain,

demonstrated an effect that was, said Dr Fauci, "very optimistic."

In the study, which was the "gold standard" randomised controlled trial, those taking the Gilead Sciences drug recovered after 11 days, compared with 15 for those given a placebo.

In other developments:

● Dominic Raab announced that a total of 26,097 people have died in hospitals, care homes and the wider community in the UK, 17 per cent more than previously reported.

● Boris Johnson will give more details today on the conditions that must be met before lockdown can be eased.

● Almost 2,700 research projects and clinical trials developing new treatments for cancer, diabetes and other diseases have been halted.

● Scientists warned that Britain's hospital death rates for the virus were comparable to those of ebola in Africa,



Captain Tom Moore was appointed an honorary colonel before his 100th birthday today after helping to raise £29 million for NHS Charities Together

with 33 per cent of those entering hospital dying.

Shares in Gilead Sciences, which are traded in New York, jumped almost 7 per cent. Gilead has a stock market value of about \$106 billion. The news also pushed shares in other biotech and pharmaceutical groups higher, leaving Wall Street indices in positive territory.

Other researchers welcomed the results, but cautioned that the drug was not a "magic bullet". The effect was still relatively small, particularly when it came to mortality. Eight per cent of those taking the drug died, versus 11 per cent taking a placebo, a gap that, unlike the recovery data, did not reach statistical significance.

Dr Fauci said that the important finding was they had clear-cut evidence that a drug worked at all. "We think it's really opening the door to the fact we have the capability of treating it. We Continued on page 2, col 5

BRITAIN'S MOST TRUSTED
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CORONAVIRUS SUMMARY

Global confirmed cases	3,190,584	225,615	Global deaths
UK confirmed cases	165,221	26,097	UK deaths

Johnson present at birth

Boris Johnson will delay taking paternity leave until later this year to deal with the coronavirus pandemic after becoming a father again at the age of 55. Downing Street announced that Carrie Symonds, the prime minister's fiancée, had given birth to a son yesterday morning, three days after Mr Johnson returned to work following his recuperation from Covid-19. It is understood that Mr Johnson was present throughout the delivery before returning to Downing Street. **Page 4**

Schools plan in doubt

Reopening schools runs a significant risk of restarting the outbreak, according to a Chinese and US study which showed that children were just as likely as adults to catch coronavirus, even if they did not display symptoms as often. Gavin Williamson, the education secretary, told MPs that the government was looking at plans for children in Years 5, 10 and 12 to return to school first. Refusing to be drawn on a date, he said: "They will be returning in a phased manner." **Page 5**

COMMENT

President Trump didn't actually recommend that people use bleach to treat Covid-19

GERARD BAKER, PAGE 27

Covid-19 matches ebola

A study of 17,000 patients treated at 166 NHS hospitals between February 6 and April 18 has shown Covid-19 to have death rates comparable to those for ebola once admission is necessary. At the end of the period, 49 per cent of the patients had been discharged, 33 per cent had lost their lives and 17 per cent were continuing to receive care. **Page 8**

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DAYS OF UK
LOCKDOWN

PM to give guidance

Boris Johnson is expected to appear today at his first Downing Street press conference since falling ill last month. He will provide detail of progress against the five tests the government has set before it will consider easing rules on social distancing. Industry has been told that ministers will give advice early next week for seven types of workplace, from call centres, to factories and shops. **Page 10**

South Africa dilemma

The public in South Africa is beginning to question whether the country's lockdown, one of the world's strictest, has been worthwhile, with 100 deaths and 395 infected patients in hospital. The economy is losing £570 million a day and is forecast to contract by about 10 per cent over the year. Up to 1.7 million are expected to lose their livelihoods. **Page 12**

US toll exceeds Vietnam

The virus death toll in the United States has exceeded the number of Americans who died in the Vietnam war. The number of virus deaths is above 59,000; the official US total for those who died in the war was 58,220. On the worst single day in Vietnam, in the Tet offensive in 1968, the US lost 246 troops. More than 2,000 people have died from coronavirus on six separate days this month. **Page 12**

Global recession on way

Economists are bracing for a deep global recession after official data showed that the United States economy contracted by 4.8 per cent in the first three months of the year, its fastest pace since the 2008 financial crisis, as the Covid-19 pandemic brought activity to a standstill. Germany has downgraded its growth forecasts for the current year from 1.1 per cent to -6.3 per cent. **Page 35**

Neutral football venues

The Premier League should give serious consideration to completing its 92 remaining matches behind closed doors at "approved" neutral stadiums to minimise the impact on emergency services, one England's leading police officers has said. Football clubs will discuss tomorrow the possibility of resuming the competition from June 8. **Page 64**

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Police fear jobless and gangs will unleash summer of crime

Fiona Hamilton Crime Editor
Neil Johnson Midlands Correspondent

The easing of lockdown restrictions could result in a violent crime wave fuelled by young unemployed men and gangs eager to reclaim their turf, police said yesterday.

Senior police are braced for a spike in crime because of a "toxic mix" of young men out of work, a resumption of public gatherings and the eventual reopening of licensed venues. In London police are said to be concerned about a surge in drugs and knife crime when gang members try to take back control of their postcodes.

David Jamieson, police and crime commissioner for the West Midlands, said he feared a summer of alcohol-fuelled violence and antisocial behaviour: "I have concerns that we could have tens, if not hundreds of thousands of young people in the West Midlands — particularly young men — who, around about June or July, find they have got no job to go back to. Or at least they are going to be unemployed for a considerable period of time," he said.

"What we do know is that young men on the street with nothing to do, who

are unemployed, equals very often crime of various sorts."

He also warned that the reopening of pubs, in which people would "perhaps imbibe rather more than usual", could spell trouble.

Mr Jamieson added: "I fear that we may be facing a summer crime wave. Young men out of work, venues reopening and large groups congregating is a toxic mix for crime. I am particularly worried about public order offences, antisocial behaviour and alcohol-fuelled violence."

Ken Marsh, chairman of the Metropolitan Police Federation, said there was "massive concern" about a surge in knife crime and violence in the capital once lockdown ended.

"Gangs are not out at the moment because of the virus, but ultimately they will want to reassert their position. We have seen a big drop in knife crime. But when lockdown is over, drug dealing and gang fighting will increase again." He said the Met's co-ordination units were already having conversations about how to tackle the issue.

Paul Griffith, president of the Police Superintendents' Association, said he was concerned "we could end up with a

more volatile and agitated society" because of the economic impact of the pandemic.

"It is well known that with any sort of social and economic deprivation, we run the risk of a rise in crime and disorder." He said there would be a natural rise in crime as licensed premises opened up and public gatherings increased.

However, he pointed out that crime figures could also spike when evidence emerged after lockdown of offences committed during the pandemic, such as domestic violence and child sexual exploitation.

Andy Cooke, chief constable of Merseyside police, said that all police forces were planning for an increase in crime once restrictions were lifted. It was "common sense" because the majority of crime had fallen and the ability of criminals to carry out offences was curtailed. That would creep up again once lockdown ended.

He said, however, that unemployment was unlikely to cause serious disorder: "In recession you see an increase in the lower end of crime. For example, acquisitive crime might rise because people steal to feed themselves."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Drug trial success

guarantee as more people, more investigators, get involved it's going to get better and better," he said.

Peter Horby, Professor of Emerging Infectious Diseases and Global Health, University of Oxford, and chairman of the government's Nertag committee, which assesses disease threats, called the early data "a fantastic result and great news for the fight against Covid-19". He added: "The next steps are to get the full data out and work on equitable access to remdesivir."

Deenan Pillay, Professor of Virology at University College London, cautioned that the study was "not the magic bullet we are all waiting for". He added: "It is not making many people who were going to die survive."

Separately, the US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer said that it aimed to have a coronavirus vaccine for emergency use by autumn, with widespread release in 2021. The company said it was speeding up the testing of its experimental drug, made with Biontech, of Germany.

In a further sign that the global effort against the virus was picking up pace, the NHS has confirmed bencematinib, a Norwegian drug developed to treat cancer, was being rushed into human trials in six hospitals after evidence that it could prevent the virus from entering and multiplying in cells.

News and analysis, pages 4-13
Leading article, page 28

Starmmer demands review of Phillips's role in inquiry

Eleni Courea Political Reporter

Sir Keir Starmer has urged the government to "engage with concerns" about the appointment of Trevor Phillips to a review into the impact of coronavirus on ethnic minorities.

Mr Phillips, 66, an antiracism campaigner and former head of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, was chosen last week to help lead the review by Public Health England (PHE). The inquiry will examine why black and ethnic minority people appear to be disproportionately affected by the virus.

His appointment has prompted a backlash from critics including 16 black and minority ethnic doctors' groups and the Muslim Council of Britain, who have cited his past comments on Muslims and Islam.

Sir Keir refused yesterday to offer his support to Mr Phillips, who was a member of his local Labour branch in Holborn & St Pancras until he was suspended from the party over allegations of Islamophobia last month.

A spokesman for the Labour leader said it was "important that this inquiry has the confidence of BAME communities". He added: "We are aware of the representations that have been made

about Trevor Phillips's appointment, and what we'd ask is that the health secretary engages in those concerns," the spokesman said.

The Labour Party told Mr Phillips that it had suspended his membership in March over a series of past remarks. These included him expressing concern about Pakistani Muslim men sexually abusing children in towns such as Rotherham, and criticising Muslims who did not wear poppies for Remembrance Sunday.

Critics described his suspension as "Orwellian" and Mr Phillips responded at the time by accusing Labour of "shutting down genuine debate".

His appointment to the PHE review has drawn criticism from Baroness Warsi, the former Conservative Party chairwoman, and the Labour MP Naz Shah, who called it "an insult to the memory of the numerous Muslims who have lost their lives".

About one in ten people in England and Wales are black or Asian, according to the 2011 census. Data from the Intensive Care National Audit and Research Centre suggested this month that 34.5 per cent of critically ill coronavirus patients were from an ethnic minority.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Four-hour wait to board aircraft

of the consultancy Aviation Advocacy, said that compulsory pre-flight health checks would also be the norm, even if they doubled waiting times at airports.

"Even if it starts raining vaccines tonight, we are still looking at two years at least to get back to levels seen before the outbreak, and it is probably going to be more like five years," he told *The Times*. "There will be fewer flights, fewer seats available, prices will go up and there will be very uncomfortable conditions because of the demands to wear personal protective equipment and maintain social distancing."

"Whereas we used to be able to turn up at the airport an hour or two before

departure, we could see something as horrible as four hours as health checks are added to the usual palaver of check-in, security and immigration."

It has been suggested that passenger numbers would be cut by a third to maintain social distancing on aircraft, with the middle seat being left empty in each row of three.

However, the airline analyst Chris Tarry said that maintaining a two-metre gap would require airlines to leave up to 80 per cent of seats empty, adding: "The maximum compliant load factor would be between 20 and 25 per cent, given current cabin densities and the seat pitch. This would act to regulate the number of passengers per flight."

Paul Zalkin, a partner at the business advisory firm Quantuma, said: "Budget

airlines operate at a break-even load factor well in excess of 80 per cent, so taking out all middle seats will not work, unless all the window and aisle seat passengers subsidise the empty middle seats. That would mean much higher ticket prices."

Tim Alderslade, chief executive of Airlines UK, said that the government had to step in to "help this industry survive". He added: "The risk is they're wedded to a historic mindset where the market wins out and there is a limit to what ministers can do. In a way we're a victim of our own success; open skies and the liberalisation of air travel has been great for consumers and we've got more airlines operating than ever before. But there comes a point where you have to protect UK interests."