

Coronavirus: latest global developments

21 July 2020

Here are the latest developments in the coronavirus crisis:

EU seals giant rescue deal

European Union leaders agree on a 750 billion euro (\$858 billion) rescue plan for the bloc's economies, battered into recession by the coronavirus pandemic.

The deal emerged from a marathon four-day and four-night summit in Brussels that saw fierce opposition from the Netherlands and Austria to what they said was too generous a package for coronavirus-hammered and highly indebted Italy and Spain.

Trump to resume coronavirus briefings

US President Donald Trump will resume regular televised coronavirus briefings Tuesday in what is seen as a bid to restore his standing with US voters who accuse him of badly fumbling the pandemic response.

The announcement comes after the leader finally speaks out in favour of mask-wearing after months of stonewalling, as polls suggest he faces defeat at November's election after the US emerged as the world's worst-hit country in the pandemic.

China demands test on entry

People travelling to China will have to prove they are not infected with COVID-19 before boarding their flights, Beijing announces, as the country seeks to prevent new infections after easing travel restrictions.

China has been relaxing a ban on most foreign travellers that was imposed in March to prevent an influx of infections after authorities largely brought the domestic epidemic under control.

More than 610,600 dead

The pandemic has killed at least 610,604 people worldwide since it surfaced in China late last year, according to an AFP tally at 1100 GMT on Tuesday based on official sources.

The United States has the most deaths with 140,909, followed by Brazil with 80,120, Britain with 45,312, Mexico with 39,485 and Italy with 35,058.

Madagascar hospitals overwhelmed

Hospitals in Madagascar's capital Antananarivo say they are struggling to cope with a rush of coronavirus patients despite the distribution of a herbal drink touted as a remedy by President Andry Rajoelina.

Hackers 'stole' vaccine research

Two Chinese nationals allegedly working partly for the state security ministry have been indicted for hacking COVID-19 vaccine research and the intellectual property of companies in the United States and other countries, the US Justice Department says.

Li Xiaoyu, 34, and Dong Jiazhi, 33, "probed for vulnerabilities in computer networks of companies developing COVID-19 vaccines, testing technology and treatments," it says.

Nobel banquet cancelled

The Nobel Foundation, which manages the Nobel Prizes, cancels its traditional December banquet due to the pandemic, but says the award ceremonies will still be held in "new forms". It says it is the first time since 1956 that the banquet has been cancelled.

Opening tennis tournament called off

The tournament in Washington DC that was due to mark the resumption of the men's tennis season after the coronavirus lockdown on August 13 has been cancelled, the ATP says, citing "continued

uncertainties" over the pandemic.

However, US Open organisers say the cancellation "in no way impacts" the behind-closed-doors Grand Slam tournament scheduled for the end of August.

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