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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Russia blocks Facebook, passes ‘fake news’ law; Microsoft, EA halt sales

March 4 (Reuters) - Russia said it would block Facebook for blocking state media and Britain’s BBC stopped reporting in the country in the face of a new media law as Moscow on Friday raised the stakes for foreign corporations over its attack on Ukraine.

Internet provider Cogent (CCOI.O) said it would terminate services to Russia, potentially deepening the country’s isolation. [read more](#)

Microsoft (MSFT.O) said it was suspending sales in Russia and video game maker Electronic Arts (EA.O), which had removed Russian teams from popular games, said it was stopping sales of games in Russia and ally Belarus. [read more](#)

Russia said that Meta Platform’s (FB.O) Facebook was being blocked for restricting state-backed channels, and it also blocked websites of the BBC, Deutsche Welle and Voice of America for what it said was false information about the war in Ukraine. [read more](#)

The BBC said it would temporarily suspend its work in Russia after introduction of a new law that could jail anyone found to be intentionally spreading “fake” news. [read more](#)

The actions by Moscow come after a week of censure by major global brands for the attack on Ukraine. Shipping and supply chain issues have made it difficult to work in Russia, as well. Companies from Shell to Apple to Toyota have taken actions from stopping sales and operations to exiting completely.

Moscow laid out options for foreign companies on Friday: stay in the country, exit entirely or hand over their holdings to local managers until they return.

First Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Belousov described the alternatives in a statement.

“The company continues to work fully in Russia,” he said in a statement. “Foreign shareholders transfer their share to be managed by Russian partners and can return to the market later,” he added, and: “The company permanently terminates operations in Russia, closes production and dismisses employees.”

No route comes without risks. Those



staying could face a backlash in Western markets where the public have rallied to Ukraine’s cause, those transferring shares could be handing over the keys with few guarantees, while those quitting may face a big loss at best, or might have to sell for a nominal sum.

“It’s a complicated process,” said Darren Woods, chief executive of U.S. energy giant Exxon Mobil (XOM.N) which is exiting oil and gas investments that involve partnerships with Russia’s Rosneft and others worth \$4 billion. [read more](#)

Companies have had little time to prepare.

Russia’s invasion - which Moscow calls a “special operation” - prompted the United States and Europe to impose swift and sweeping sanctions, affecting everything from global payments systems to a range of hi-tech products. [read more](#)

“Western companies probably haven’t lost so much money so quickly due to geopolitics since the Shah was overthrown in Iran,” said Renaissance Capital chief economist Charlie Robertson, referring to the Islamic revolution more than four

decades ago that led to an exodus of Western businesses.

STAYING PUT

Yet some companies plan to keep going. Italian tyre maker Pirelli said it had set up a “crisis committee” to monitor developments but did not expect to halt production at either of its two Russian plants.

Its rival, Finland’s Nokian Tyres, said last week it was shifting production of some product lines out of Russia.

But there are no easy fixes even for those looking for an exit when there are limited trading counterparties.

British insurer and asset manager Royal London said it planned to sell its Russian assets, which it said only accounted for about 0.1% of its portfolio. [read more](#)

“We can’t trade these things anyway, but as soon as we can, we obviously intend to divest,” Chief Executive Barry O’Dwyer said.

For companies packing up, the Russian first deputy prime minister said a fast-track bankruptcy plan “will support the employment and social well-being of citizens so that bona fide entrepreneurs can ensure the effective functioning of business.”

‘EXTREME SCENARIO’
So far global companies, banks and investors have announced they have exposure in some form to Russia of more than \$110 billion. That number could rise. Data from research firm Morningstar shows exposure from international funds to the tune of \$60 billion in stocks and bonds. [read more](#)

BASF (BASF.DE), the world’s largest chemicals group, said it was halting new business in Russia and Belarus, except for food production for humanitarian causes. It also hinted at the minefield of new rules sanctions have introduced.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

03/05/2022



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Boston's Mayor Wu Wants More Taxes To Fund Low-Cost Housing



Boston's new mayor Michelle Wu pushed forward a plan to pay for low-cost housing by taxing high-dollar real estate sales.

She signed the city council's formal request asking state lawmakers for permission to impose a transfer tax of as much as 2% on property sales of \$2 million or more including high-end condos, office building retail and

multi-family rentals. Sellers would bear the cost which would apply only to the amount above \$2 million. This move was immediately opposed by Republican Governor Charlie Baker and many real estate owners including many Asians.

Mayor Wu said the fee will generate tens of millions of dollars each year creating housing safety and stability and will allow people to stay

in neighborhoods to put down their roots and help them grow.

Looking around today, all the major cities in the United States from Boston, New York, Washington D.C., Houston, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco, all the mayors are Democrats. They need to take care of their voters after they are elected.

At the present time, there is

a very obvious phenomenon happening in the U.S. The distance between the rich and the poor has increased.

We really don't want to see more additional tax levied to increase the growth of the economy. Many businesses went under in the pandemic time. We need to help these many businesses reopen and get back on their feet, not just only the housing projects.



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



Demonstrators holding placards stand next to mocked up body bags during a protest against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, at Trafalgar Square in London, Britain March 4, 2022. REUTERS/Henry Nicholls



Demonstrators hold placards during an anti-war protest following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in Caracas, Venezuela March 4, 2022. The writing on the signs read "Putin = Maduro. Justice first" and "Venezuela stands with Ukraine." REUTERS/Leonardo Fernandez Viloria



Anti-war protesters attach sunflowers to barriers in front of the Russian embassy, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in London, Britain March 3, 2022. REUTERS/Peter Nicholls



Bolivians and Ukrainian residents gather outside the Russian Embassy during an anti-war protest following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in La Paz, Bolivia March 3, 2022. REUTERS/Manuel Claude



People hold placards during a protest against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, at Trafalgar Square in London, Britain March 4, 2022. REUTERS/Henry Nicholls



A child holds a placard during a protest against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, at Trafalgar Square in London, Britain March 4, 2022. REUTERS/Henry Nicholls

How To Handle Quarantining, Testing, And Masking After Covid-19 Exposure

Omicron Is Exploding. What To Do If You're Exposed

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



People line up for a Covid-19 test in Los Angeles on January 5, 2022, as the omicron variant continues to spread at a blistering pace. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)



1) I just found out I've been exposed to someone who tested positive — what's the first thing I should do?

There's broad unanimity on this front. "Don't run to get tested. And don't panic," said David Dowdy, an epidemiologist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. If you spent time indoors with someone and then find out they've tested positive, it's possible you might get Covid-19 from the exposure, but you won't test positive immediately after it. So if it's only been a day or two since your exposure, the thing to focus on first is not testing, but the possibility of needing to quarantine — and the certainty of needing a good mask. If you're unvaccinated, or are vaccinated with two doses but not yet boosted, you should quarantine for five days and continue to wear a mask around others for five more days after that. If you're boosted, then you don't need to quarantine, according to the CDC guidelines. But you should still wear a mask around others for 10 days after the exposure.



And yes, "wear a mask around others" includes others in your home — like children or roommates — if possible. Dowdy acknowledged that's hard to do, but said his family did it when one of them recently had Covid-19: They opened the windows in the house, wore N95s, and slept in different

rooms. "Not everyone will be able to do this," he said, "but for those who can, it's the ideal way to halt transmission." All that said, the CDC guidance has also led to other questions.

2) The CDC says I don't need to quarantine if I'm vaccinated and boosted. Is that really sound guidance?

When I asked the epidemiologists whether they agreed with the CDC on this point, they expressed a range of opinion.

"I think this is a safe bet. Boosters prevent infection from omicron very well," Katelyn Jetelina, an infectious diseases epidemiologist with the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, told me by email. In other words, if you're boosted, the chance that you'll spread the omicron variant is significantly lowered because there's a lower chance of you becoming infected with it in the first place.



Dowdy, for his part, said of the CDC guidance, "I think this is reasonable, depending on the level of transmission in your area. If you're in the midst of a hot spot, it probably makes sense to quarantine even if you are vaccinated. But if transmission levels are low, this is reasonable advice."

He added that it's important to consider a couple of other factors in making your personal decision: first, whether you frequently come into contact with other people who could get really sick if they got infected, and second, if it's been more than a few months since your last vaccine dose. "In either of these cases, it makes sense to quarantine, even if you are vaccinated," he said.

Tara Smith, an epidemiologist at Kent State University, told me she doesn't think we have enough data about omicron to know if the CDC's advice is solid. "If you can quarantine, I would still recommend it," she said.



3) When should I take a test? What should I do if I have difficulty getting a test?

The best time to get tested seems to be about five days after exposure (or at any time after a fever develops). Just remember that tests

— especially rapid antigen tests — are not foolproof. "Testing negative doesn't mean you can go mask-free. You should still mask around others in public" until it's been 10 days since the exposure, Smith said. "Even with a negative test, if you have exposure and symptoms, it's best to assume you are Covid-positive and act as such."

What about if you can't get access to a test? "In that case, Dowdy said, "The best thing to do is continue quarantine for 10 days after any exposure. If you haven't developed symptoms within 10 days, it's reasonable to end quarantine at that time."

With all of this, he said, there is a balance of risks and benefits — as well as personal circumstances — that must be assessed on an individual level. "What I'm describing is the ideal situation — for example, someone who can easily quarantine and continue working at home," he said. "But most of us don't live in those ideal situations, and it's important for all of us to be understanding of others who may not have the same support systems that we have."



Jetelina agrees that if you have difficulty getting a test, you should assume that you are positive and isolate until you can get your hands on one. "If you're still asymptomatic after five days (and still can't get a test), you can stop isolation as long as you can wear a good mask for five more days," she wrote, noting N95s are the best option.

4) The CDC says I'm supposed to mask up for 10 days after exposure. Is that really necessary?

Both Jetelina and Smith were crystal-clear on this one: Yes!

"This is incredibly important as you can still be infectious after five days," Jetelina said. We're still learning about the transmission dynamics of omicron, and although many people will probably stop being infectious before 10 days have passed, "wearing a mask during that period will help to reduce any chance of spreading the virus," Smith explained. Dowdy noted that compared to other measures that could be enacted (like lockdowns), wearing a mask in public places is arguably not the hardest thing to do. So wearing a mask for 10 days is "the ideal," he said, though he reemphasized the caveat that "we have to be understanding of people for whom this might not be possible."

5) What kind of mask should I wear? What should I do if I can't get an N95?

The best bet is an N95. KN95 masks work great, too.

Even though these masks are in high demand right now, you can still order them from mass suppliers like Walmart or Amazon, or from

retailers like WellBefore, Bona Fide Masks, DemeTECH, and N95 Mask Co. (There may be a shipping lag for some of these masks, so even if you haven't been exposed, it's a good idea to stock up now so you'll be prepared.) "Remember that the fit of the mask is just as important as the type of mask," Dowdy said. "Wearing an N95 without fitting it to your face is defeating the purpose of wearing an N95 in the first place."

If you can't get an N95 or a KN95, the next-best option is a tight-fitting surgical mask. Adding a cloth mask on top of your surgical mask will further help eliminate gaps around your face. If you've been exposed or tested positive, do not rely on a cloth mask alone to prevent you from spreading the virus to others.



6) If I get a negative rapid test result, can I trust the result enough to go see, say, my elderly parents?

It's important to remember that rapid tests aren't perfect — and even with more sensitive tests like PCR, being negative one day doesn't mean you won't be positive in another day or two.

"If you have symptoms or a close contact [with an infected person], I would not trust one negative test," Jetelina said, adding that it's a good idea to retest at least 24 hours later.

Likewise, Smith said, "I would still try to mask around others if you have been exposed, when possible, especially if individuals you may spend time with are in high-risk categories."

She noted that there have been some reports recently that sampling the nose isn't sensitive enough early on to detect omicron infection, and that samples from the throat or saliva may detect it earlier. (Note that these reports are not yet peer-reviewed.) However, we don't yet know if those early throat or saliva samples mean infected individuals are already spreading virus to others. According to Dowdy, it's "really a judgment call at this point" whether you should feel comfortable visiting parents after one negative rapid test result. You have to consider your level of exposure, your parents' health, how long and in what setting you'll be seeing each other, and how both you and your parents weigh the value of seeing each other against the risk of them getting sick.

"If your parents are relatively healthy and you haven't been closely exposed (and are feeling well), it's probably reasonable to trust that negative test result," he said. "If your parents are much more frail and you're living with someone who has Covid in your house, I'd wait." (Vox.com)

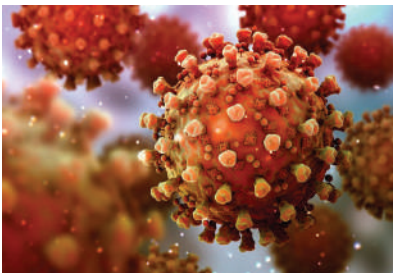
Several Countries Detect New COVID-19 Mutation



Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The highly contagious mutation of the coronavirus first detected in the United Kingdom continues to spread, now being reported in parts of Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, Australia and Canada. On Monday, South Korea became the latest country to report COVID-19 infections with the variation that could be more easily passed between people, according to the Korean Herald. Most cases have been linked to travel from Great Britain, where the variant was first detected, the newspaper reported. The United Kingdom initiated a lockdown, and several countries banned travelers from Great Britain last week, but researchers are concerned that the variation could have been circulating undetected in other countries for weeks. "Unfortunately, this is another twist in the plot," Alessandro Vespignani, director of the Network Science Institute at Northeastern University in Boston, told the New York Times. Canadian officials have detected at least two cases in Ontario, according to The Washington Post. A couple from a town north of Toronto contracted the variant but had no travel history, which means it like-

ly came from community spread.

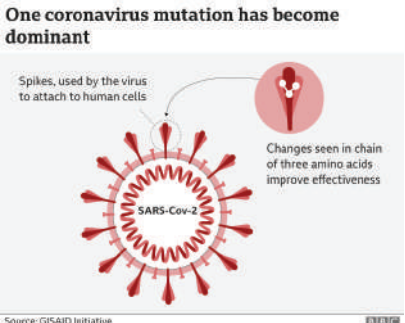


The mutation has been found in seven people in Japan who had either traveled to Great Britain or been in contact with someone who did. Japan will close its borders to non-residents on Monday, a ban that will last through the end of January, according to the BBC. In Spain, the variant has been found in Madrid, where four cases have been confirmed and three are probable, according to The Guardian. All these cases are linked to recent travel to Great Britain. The first case in France was found in Tours, about 150 miles southwest of Paris, according to Reuters. The French citizen was living in Great Britain and traveled from London to central France on Dec. 19, a day before the British government

COMMUNITY

started the lockdown. The man doesn't have symptoms and is isolating at home. Sweden also detected its first case this weekend, Reuters reported. The traveler visited the country from Great Britain for Christmas and is isolating in Sormland, a city south of Stockholm.

Viruses mutate often. Several coronavirus mutations have been detected this year, but they were minor, The New York Times reported.



The latest version of the virus found in Great Britain has 23 mutations, which may change how it is transmitted. A new study published by British researchers last week found that the variant may be 56% more contagious, but they didn't find any evidence that it causes more severe COVID-19. Vaccine specialists say that current COVID-19 vaccines should be able to block the new variant.

"The preliminary findings are pretty convincing that more rapid vaccination is going to be a really important thing for any country that has to deal with this or similar variants," Nicholas Davies, the lead author and an epidemiologist at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, told the newspaper.

Additional variants have been identified in South Africa, Nigeria, and other countries as well, according to CBS News. The U.S. hasn't yet reported any cases of the mutation. However, the U.S. will require airline passengers from the United Kingdom to test negative within 72 hours of their departure, the CDC announced. The new rule will begin on Monday. (Courtesy <https://www.webmd.com>)

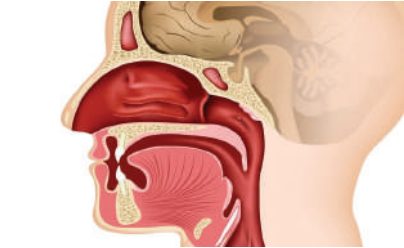
Related

How COVID-19 Affects Your Body

Doctors continue to learn about the short-term and long-term effects of COVID-19 on your body. For some people, it starts with basic flu symptoms. But it could eventually affect your lungs, liver, kidneys, and even your brain.



How It Spreads Usually the virus makes contact with you when a nearby infected person sends droplets into the air by coughing, sneezing, or talking. It spreads easily between people within about 6 feet of each other. An infected person can spread these droplets, even if they don't feel sick. The virus may infect you after you touch an object, like a doorknob, that has the virus on it. But that's not as common.



Upper Respiratory Infection Once the virus enters the body, it usually settles in the cells that line your nose, sinus cavity, and throat. For most people, this is where it stays. Symptoms often follow, but you may not feel anything for up to 2 weeks, as the virus starts to invade healthy cells and reproduce. You can transmit it to others even if you don't show any symptoms.



Other Common Symptoms The first

symptoms that typically appear include a fever, headache, sore throat, and dry cough. But what you'll feel can vary widely in this early stage. You may also have:

- Shortness of breath
- Chills, fever, body aches
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Unusual tiredness
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Nausea or diarrhea



Lower Respiratory Infection If your immune system can't subdue COVID-19 in the first week or so, the virus may move down into your lungs. There, it attacks cells that line them. Fluid and mucus build up and make it harder to get oxygen to your blood. It gets tough to breathe. This is pneumonia. Most people recover in a week or two, but it can take longer. (Courtesy [webmd.com](https://www.webmd.com))

