

World blocks UK over new mutant virus strain

23rd December, 2020



Forty countries have blocked air, sea and land travel to and from the United Kingdom. Many European countries, Canada, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Russia, India, and Colombia are among the countries. The reason is because of a

new strain of COVID-19 that is spreading around the UK. The new coronavirus is a mutant - this means it has changed from the original virus that started spreading at the beginning of the year. Some nations have blocked transport links to the UK for a few days; others for at least two weeks. Many countries say they are reviewing the situation. The biggest problems are being caused by a travel ban from France. A lot of the UK's food comes across the English Channel from France.

The UK government says the mutant virus is 70 per cent more infectious than the original coronavirus. It said the mutant strain is so fast-spreading that it is "out of control". London and many other parts of the country are now in lockdown. The government has issued new rules about mixing with other people. This means most people will only be able to spend Christmas with the people they live with. They cannot travel to see any other family members or friends. An opposition leader said: "The news over the last 24 hours has been deeply disturbing. The number of coronavirus cases has nearly doubled in the last week." The UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson assured people that there would be enough food.

Sources: thenationalnews.com / bbc.com / reuters.com

Writing

The mutant virus means the world needs to go into lockdown for two weeks. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

air / sea / land / countries / strain / coronavirus / mutant / transport / situation / government / infectious / original / out of control / lockdown / travel / family / food

True / False

- a) The article says over 40 countries have blocked travel to the UK. T / F
- b) A new type of COVID-19 is spreading around the United Kingdom. T / F
- c) Some countries have blocked travel to the UK for two weeks. T / F
- d) The biggest problem for the UK is a travel ban from Spain. T / F
- e) The mutant virus is 70% more infectious than before. T / F
- f) The UK government says it has the mutant virus under control. T / F
- g) People in the UK can only spend Xmas with people they live with. T / F
- h) The UK leader said there might not be enough food. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. blocked | a. worrying |
| 2. reason | b. first |
| 3. strain | c. created |
| 4. original | d. cause |
| 5. caused | e. catching |
| 6. infectious | f. sufficient |
| 7. issued | g. variety |
| 8. disturbing | h. multiplied by two |
| 9. doubled | i. released |
| 10. enough | j. barred |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of countries blocking travel to the UK?
- b) How important is travel?
- c) How has coronavirus affected your life?
- d) What do you know about the new strain of coronavirus?
- e) How worried are you about the new strain of coronavirus?
- f) What problems will the travel bans cause the UK?
- g) Would you like to go the UK right now?
- h) Is the world beating the coronavirus?

Phrase Match

1. Forty countries have blocked air,
 2. a new strain of COVID-19 that is spreading
 3. for at
 4. Many countries say they are
 5. A lot of the UK's food comes across
 6. the mutant virus is 70 per cent
 7. so fast-spreading that it is
 8. The government has issued
 9. deeply
 10. The number of coronavirus cases
- a. more infectious
 - b. has nearly doubled
 - c. the English Channel
 - d. new rules
 - e. around the UK
 - f. sea and land travel
 - g. disturbing
 - h. "out of control"
 - i. reviewing the situation
 - j. least two weeks

Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Are you worried the new strain is 70% more infectious?
- c) How worrying is it the mutant virus is out of control?
- d) Should people not travel this Christmas?
- e) How is your country dealing with coronavirus?
- f) What three adjectives best describe this story?
- g) What happens if the UK cannot get enough food?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the UK's leader?

Spelling

1. gamno the countries
2. indegspar around the UK
3. changed from the oinairlg virus
4. for at telas two weeks
5. they are reviewing the inatstiuo
6. being uecasd by a travel ban
7. more uoisifecnt
8. out of onortcl
9. An ptioopsino leader
10. deeply dibsintrgu
11. The number of coronavirus cases has nearly beloudd
12. ssdaeur people that there would be enough

Answers – Synonym Match

1. j	2. d	3. g	4. b	5. c
6. e	7. i	8. a	9. h	10. f

Role Play

Role A – Party

You think the best thing to do after COVID-19 is to party. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which of these you will do last (and why): travel, hug friends or continue hand washing.

Role B – Travel

You think the best thing to do after COVID-19 is to travel. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which of these you will do last (and why): party, hug friends or continue hand washing.

Role C – Hug Friends

You think the best thing to do after COVID-19 is to hug friends. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which of these you will do last (and why): travel, party or continue hand washing.

Role D – Continue Hand Washing

You think the best thing to do after COVID-19 is to continue hand washing. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which of these you will do last (and why): travel, hug friends or party.

Speaking – Post-Covid

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to do after COVID-19 at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Go to events
- Stop worrying
- Travel
- Party
- Continue hand washing
- Stop wearing masks
- Go to restaurants
- Hug friends

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.