

# One month of the coronavirus pandemic: 7.2 million infected, 165,000 dead

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The month of July saw a record number of new cases of COVID-19 worldwide, as the disease continued to tear through the global population.

More than seven million people were infected with the disease last month, compared with 4.4 million the month before. And 165,000 people died, compared with 139,000 the previous month. In total, 18.4 million people worldwide have been infected, and the death toll will have hit, by the end of today, over 700,000.

The center of the global disaster is the United States, the wealthiest capitalist country with the most extreme social inequality and where human life is cheapest.

In the United States, there were two million new cases in July, up from 800,000 in June and more than double the previous worst month, April, while 27,500 people lost their lives. If the disease continues at this pace, 330,000 people will die in the US in the course of a year.

White House Coronavirus Task Force Coordinator Dr. Deborah Birx warned Sunday on CNN's "State of the Union," "What we are seeing today is different from March and April. It is extraordinarily widespread." She then added that the pandemic is entrenched in both "rural and urban" areas.

This disaster is the predictable consequence of the White House's abandonment of all efforts to contain the pandemic as part of its drive to prematurely force workers back into workplaces where the disease is raging. In April, when states throughout the country reopened factories, the country had just passed one million confirmed coronavirus cases and was nearing 58,000 known deaths in this country alone.

Seven weeks ago, Vice President Mike Pence declared that "the alarm bells over a second wave of coronavirus infections" were "overblown." He claimed that "great progress" was being made, which was "a

cause for celebration." The administration's "success" had at that point resulted in 2.2 million cases of COVID-19 and more than 121,000 dead.

Today, the real testament to the administration's response is the ongoing mass suffering and death across the country. There are more than 4.8 million cases in the United States, more than double what they were in mid-June. An additional 38,000 men, women and children are dead, bringing the national tally to just under 159,000.

The situation is similarly dire in Latin America, which has recorded five million cases and well over 203,000 deaths. The situation is most dangerous in Brazil, led by the fascistic Jair Bolsonaro, who has repeatedly dismissed the pandemic as a "little flu" and has actively ignored warnings from his top public health officials, firing two during the course of Brazil's outbreak. The country has so far suffered more than 2.7 million COVID-19 cases and is expected to cross the threshold of 100,000 deaths sometime this week.

In Mexico, led by Andrés Manuel López Obrador, there have been 439,000 cases and 47,000 deaths, both of which are considered to be vast underestimations of the spread and death toll of the pandemic in the country.

The pandemic has similarly spiraled out of control in India. There are 1.8 million known cases, with more than 50,000 new cases each day. Nearly 39,000 people have died. It took only 25 days to add one million more cases to the current caseload from July 10, when the total COVID-19 cases in India stood at 794,000. This means that more than half of the country's total cases occurred in the past four weeks.

The disease is also spiking again in European countries, such as Spain, France and, to a lesser extent, Germany. All three of these countries were hit hard

when the coronavirus first emerged in Europe in March and April and had done a better job than the US in suppressing their outbreaks. But as a consequence of their governments' efforts to get workers back on the job, the number of cases is growing. Germany now averages more than 600 new cases a day, France more than 1,000 and Spain more than 2,000.

Throughout the world, the disease is fueling unemployment, poverty, homelessness and hunger. According to the United Nations, hunger tied to the pandemic is leading to the deaths of 10,000 children every single month.

In April, the World Health Organization warned strongly against premature economic reopenings by any country if it could not reliably “find, isolate, test and treat all cases, and trace every contact.” During that same period, Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top US infectious disease expert, warned that abandoning restrictions on business operations would cause “needless suffering and death.”

Instead, the US political establishment, from the White House on down to state governors in both parties, abandoned efforts to contain the pandemic, allowing businesses to reopen and fuel the spread of the disease. The American financial oligarchy is totally indifferent to the death and suffering of millions.

The United States has adopted a de facto policy of “herd immunity,” forcing workers back into factories, plants and offices so corporations can continue to extract surplus value to pay for the billions or trillions of dollars handed out to the rich.

While this policy is particularly egregious in the United States, it is mirrored in every country, where the primary concern of governments has been to preserve not the health and well-being of the population but the wealth of the financial oligarchy.

The COVID-19 disaster is the product of the anarchy and irrationality of capitalism, most nakedly expressed in the industrialized world in the United States. The destruction of the health care infrastructure over decades is of a piece with the financialization and deindustrialization of the economy and the destruction of jobs, wages and social services.

Instead of global cooperation, the US is using the prospect of a potential vaccine to its own advantage, engaged in what the *Wall Street Journal* called a “high-stakes geopolitical scramble to secure supplies for a

scientific breakthrough that could confer enormous economic and political power.”

On February 28, now more than five months ago, the International Committee of the Fourth International issued a call for a globally coordinated emergency response to the coronavirus pandemic. At a time when the total number of cases stood at 100,000 and the number of deaths stood at 3,000, the ICFI warned that “the danger cannot be overstated.” Rather than taking measures to stop the pandemic, the ruling class utilized the health care disaster to gorge itself, profiting off of death and social devastation.

Now, more than 18 million have been infected, and more than 700,000 people have died. Seven hundred thousand people! All with families, friends and coworkers devastated by the loss. And there is no end in sight.

There could hardly be a more damning exposure of the social, political and moral bankruptcy of capitalism. The working class will not forget what has happened. The pandemic, acting upon the preexisting crisis of the capitalist system, has created the conditions for enormous revolutionary convulsions, in the United States and throughout the world.



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