

Fall in UK daily COVID cases used to reinforce government propaganda that everyone can “live with the virus”

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UK Health Minister Sajid Javid was forced to delete and then issue an apology for a tweet he had posted Saturday declaring that the public must not “cower” from COVID-19, but instead learn to “live with” the virus. Javid tweeted the comments after stating that he had contracted COVID and made a “full recovery” from it.

At least 152,000 people in the UK made no recovery from COVID and lost their lives to the Conservative government’s herd immunity policy. Javid now denounces as “cowards” those seeking to protect themselves and others from the ravages of the virus, amid his government’s “Freedom Day” elimination of mandatory containment measures.

Javid’s comments met with a wave of protest from those who have lost loved ones. But his original tweet was repeating, more crudely, statements he has made consistently from the moment he was appointed health secretary last month. Even as he forecast that within months Britain’s population could be hit by more than 100,000 infections a day, Javid tweeted July 4, eight days after taking office, “We are going to have to learn to live with Covid and find ways to cope with it—just as we already do with flu”.

This too was an unvarnished declaration of the government’s “herd immunity” policy. Last Friday, Prof Robert West, a health psychologist at University College London who participates in the behavioural science subgroup of the government’s Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE), said, “What we are seeing is a decision by the government to get as many people infected as possible, as quickly as possible, while using rhetoric about caution as a way of putting the blame on the public for the consequences.

“It looks like the government judges that the damage to health and healthcare services will be worth the political capital it will gain from this approach.”

With Monday’s COVID cases falling again for a sixth day in a row, to 24,950, the entire media is engaged in whipping up support for Javid’s position that it is possible to rush back to normal. The *Daily Mail* commented, “As cases plunge again, are we past peak of 3rd wave?”, while the *Daily Express* headlined, “Hope covid is going away for summer: Infections fall by a third as vaccine rollout gains upper hand against virus”. The *Daily Mail* followed up with, “Is Covid on the run?”, declaring that “Covid is falling or levelling off in EVERY region of England”.

What is the reality?

The government began abandoning all restrictions months before July 19, leading to an upsurge in cases. At the beginning of May, cases had declined to around 1,500. As restrictions began to be relaxed, they surged 11-fold, reaching 54,674 new cases on July 17. On July 22, cases fell to below 40,000 and have fallen each day since to a seven-day average of 38,268, a fall of 17 percent.

None of this supports or justifies the government’s “let the virus rip” agenda. Firstly, these figures do not include the impact of the full opening up of the economy on July 19 and there is nothing to suggest that infections will not once again rise inexorably.

Other factors have facilitated the temporary fall, including the fact that many people are still wearing masks in shops and on public transport, in defiance of government guidance. The number of tests being taken has also declined. Another key factor is that the school holiday period began last week, with children no longer

in crowded classrooms spreading COVID. On July 15, according to Department for Education figures, 1.05 million children, approximately one in seven pupils, were not in school either due to being infected with COVID, or because they were self-isolating.

Around a third of young people remain totally unvaccinated and 10 percent of the overall population, with the danger that millions will be infected in the period ahead. COVID is already becoming a disease of younger generations. Office for National Statistics data for England shows that there are almost six times as many infections among 16 to 24-year-olds than among 50- to 69-year-olds.

Speaking to the *Guardian*, scientists and health professionals warned of the terrible consequences of young people not being vaccinated. Dr Samantha Batt-Rawden, a senior intensive care registrar, said, “The vast majority of those requiring intensive care are unvaccinated: some of them will die. It is heartbreaking for us as NHS staff to watch people suffer unnecessarily knowing that this almost certainly could have been prevented by the vaccine.”

“We are seeing patients in their 30s, or even in their 20s, who are fit and have no other medical problems on ICUs [intensive care units]. As an ICU doctor I am begging you to have the vaccine. Please don’t let not having the jab become the biggest mistake of your life.”

The *Spectator*, among the most right-wing of the UK’s pro-Tory media, issued its own muted note of caution. In a piece Monday by Oliver Johnson, “Covid cases are falling – but ‘don’t think it’s all over’”, he notes that the ONS weekly infection survey, based on a random sampling of the population, “also picks up asymptomatic cases.” He includes a graph that “shows data to 17 July and there isn’t any sign of a fall,” warning, “So far we haven’t even seen the effect of the 19 July reopening in the data, plus there’s the return to schools and universities to come, seasonal effects coming back in the autumn and so on. And let’s also remember that the UK is only at 70 per cent of adults double-jabbed.

“And look at vaccine take-up amongst the young: it shows signs of plateauing at a lower level. Which means we may end up with plenty of people still susceptible—thereby creating the opportunity for another wave, or a resumption of the previous growth

trend.”

Britain has still recorded almost 265,000 cases in the last week, by some distance the highest number in Europe and the fourth highest of any country in the world. The countries who have recorded more cases, India, Indonesia and the United States, all have far larger populations. The last week saw 450 deaths, up from 283 in the seven days prior, an almost 60 percent increase.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson is acutely aware that the fall in cases is temporary, which accounts for him “raging”, according to a report in the *Times*, over the lower uptake of vaccines among young people—for fear a fresh spike in infections would make it more difficult to carry through his criminal agenda.

The ruling elite want nothing to interfere with the “learn to live with COVID” edict. The *Daily Telegraph* editorialised Monday, “Sajid Javid has the right approach”. It complained, “A week after so-called “freedom day” was supposed to usher in a semblance of normality, the country is encouraged to continue to be fearful of a virus that is having a much reduced impact because of the vaccines. As it is not official policy to eradicate the virus entirely, Mr Javid’s observations are perfectly sound and realistic.”

Protesting that “people are still being told to wear masks on public transport. They are to be required to show proof of vaccination for a host of events involving large crowds, even outdoors,” it concluded, “Businesses trying to rebuild after all the lockdown restrictions are desperate for a change of policy, which ministers are inexplicably resisting.”

Johnson and Javid can count on the Labour Party, who are at one with the government in fully reopening the economy. With the domestic football season due to start in just three weeks, with crowds of up to 75,000 able to gather in stadiums, Labour even said Monday that it opposed government suggestions that access to Premier League matches be limited to the fully vaccinated.



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