

SPORT'S CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

Premier League fan ban 'in weeks' ♦ Footballers told: **Don't shake hands** ♦ Twickenham's stay-away warning **SPORT, PAGES 1-3**

The Daily Telegraph

BRITAIN'S BEST QUALITY NEWSPAPER

Patients told to stay home if they get 'mild' virus

Health chief admits there are not enough beds as he urges sufferers to avoid hospitals

By Laura Donnelly HEALTH EDITOR

PATIENTS with a mild case of coronavirus will be told to stay at home rather than seek treatment in hospital, amid rising pressure on the NHS, it was announced last night.

The shift in policy came as officials confirmed the first death in the UK from the virus, a patient in Berkshire who is understood to be a woman in her 70s. It followed warnings from the country's chief medical officer that half of coronavirus cases in the UK are likely to occur over just three weeks, and the NHS does not have enough beds to cope with the likely number of patients. The UK now has 116 cases, which is more than Hong Kong.

Prof Chris Whitty said there was now a "slim to zero" chance of avoiding a global pandemic, which could see "huge pressure" on the NHS, making it impossible for all who need beds to get them. Until now it had been thought that patients who tested positive for the virus were being monitored in hospitals, but last night Prof Whitty disclosed that 45 patients were actually self-isolated at home.

The new guidance puts the UK at odds with European Centre for Disease Control guidelines adopted by other nations which says that, in the first stages of an outbreak, patients should be isolated in hospital.

Announcing the new strategy, he said: "We have moved to a situation where if people have very minimal symptoms and we think they are clinically safe, and they are able to self-isolate we think this is actually safer for them, as well as more pleasant if they can self-isolate in their own homes."

"Anybody who needs hospitalisation will be hospitalised."

It came as:
♦ Boris Johnson insisted that food supplies would not run out even in the "crux" of a coronavirus epidemic;

♦ The Premier League banned pre-match handshakes and suggested matches could be played behind closed doors;

♦ News emerged of 140 Britons stranded on board a cruise ship after a passenger died of the disease;

♦ Banks sent thousands of staff home in Canary Wharf after a banker tested positive for the illness.

At the moment, anyone with symptoms is advised to call NHS 111 and, if

they are suspected of having coronavirus, they will be sent to a hospital and tested in an isolated pod away from other patients. If the test is positive the initial strategy was to keep patients in hospital to monitor the disease.

Now patients will be sent home unless they have a serious case or are considered vulnerable due to age or underlying health conditions.

Officials said those being kept at home would be checked daily. Currently, anyone suspected of having the disease is tested. However, they added that when a major outbreak takes hold, testing every suspected patient will become too onerous and anyone with a cough or fever will simply be ordered to stay at home for a fortnight.

Yesterday, NHS sources warned that testing services were now under severe demand, and struggling to cope with the number of patients now needing to be tested. Calls to the 111 hotline rose by almost 80,000 in a week, to more than 440,000 - with more than 100,000 left unanswered.

The Government's realistic worst-case scenarios suggest that 80 per cent of people could contract coronavirus, with between 15 and 20 per cent of those cases needing hospital care.

Prof Whitty said: "One of the things that is clear if you model the epidemic is that we will get 50 per cent of all the cases over a three-week period and 95 per cent of the cases over a nine-week period, if it follows the trajectory we think it is likely to."

"If all of those were spaced out on the NHS over two or three years that would be easily manageable but it's the fact they are so heavily concentrated."

"If this goes to the top end of the range ... there will be a period where the NHS has huge pressure on it for a relatively short period of time."

"Depending on how high the peak, this could be anywhere from a rather bad winter for the NHS - but in spring or summer for the NHS - through to huge numbers way overtopping the ability of the NHS realistically to put everyone in beds and that obviously would have big pressures on the service," he told MPs.

Prof Whitty said: "Things may be considerably less well done than we

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The Queen presenting the Gold Cup to Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum at Royal Ascot in 2012. A court yesterday found he had waged a campaign of fear on his ex-wife

British court finds Dubai ruler abducted his own daughters

By Steve Bird

THE ruler of Dubai abducted two of his daughters, a senior judge has ruled, as he took the highly unusual step of publishing a series of damning findings to protect two of the sheikh's other children at the centre of a custody battle.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum was found to have waged a "campaign of fear and intimidation" on Princess Haya, his youngest wife, after she began an affair with a British bodyguard before she fled to the UK.

The High Court ruling yesterday could mean the 70-year-old billionaire vice president and prime minister of the United Arab Emirates, who is on

"respectful and friendly terms" with the British Royal family, and a personal friend of the Queen, has broken English criminal law and breached "internationally accepted human rights".

A bitter 10-month family court battle between the sheikh and Princess Haya even heard claims that the couple's eldest child, Jalila, 12, was to be married off to Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, who was linked to the assassination in Turkey of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

However, in an extensive "findings of fact" judgment, Sir Andrew McFarlane, president of the Family Division, ruled Princess Haya's fears about a possible forced marriage could not be substantiated and were based on "hearsay".

But his findings over the treatment of Princess Haya, 45, as well as two of his elder daughters, Princess Shamsa and Princess Latifa, who remain "deprived of their liberty", could trigger a diplomatic crisis between Britain and the UAE, a key Gulf and Middle East ally.

Those tensions are likely to be greater as Shamsa was found to have been abducted from the UK in 2000.

An investigation by Cambridgeshire police at the time was dropped due to insufficient evidence. The judge concluded that inquiry was not blocked by the "direct intervention" of the Foreign Office or that "any intervention of the

FCO had been triggered by the father or the government of Dubai."

However, in a response to a Freedom of Information application made by the princess's legal team to the Foreign Office last year, the ministry replied that "releasing information on this issue would increase public knowledge about our relations with UAE ... disclosure of this information would reduce the UK government's ability to protect and promote UK interests through its relations with UAE which would not be in the public interest."

Meanwhile, Sir Andrew, the most senior family judge in England and Wales, also found the refusal of the

Johnson considering tunnel under the Irish Sea instead of bridge

By Simon Johnson SCOTTISH POLITICAL EDITOR

BORIS JOHNSON'S proposed bridge linking the British mainland with Northern Ireland is now more likely to be a tunnel, the Scottish Secretary has announced.

Alistair Jack said that he and the Prime Minister both favoured examining a tunnel from Portpatrick in Dumfries and Galloway to Larne in County Antrim.

He said a tunnel would be cheaper to build than Mr Johnson's previous plan

for a bridge over the Irish Sea, which he warned might have to close up to 100 days a year because of high winds.

It would also avoid a Second World War munitions dump in an area known as Beaufort's Dyke, and could be built by 2030, he claimed.

Mr Jack said other options would be examined, including a crossing that incorporated both a bridge and tunnel, but he insisted he and the Prime Minister were "on the same page" about the tunnel proposal.

The Prime Minister's spokesman confirmed last night that a tunnel

crossing was being studied by government officials as an option for the proposed crossing over the Irish Sea.

He said: "The Prime Minister is passionate about improving connectivity all across the UK and work is being carried out to look at this project."

Although Mr Jack admitted that civil servants had not yet estimated a cost, he said Arlene Foster, the Northern Irish First Minister, was also "very enthusiastic" about the plan.

It emerged in September last year that the Prime Minister had asked his civil servants for advice on building a

'The best solution to link Scotland and Northern Ireland is a tunnel - and the PM is keen on the idea'

21-mile bridge, with the cost estimated at around £15 billion.

However, the Institution of Civil Engineers argued earlier this year that the Government should build a tunnel instead, referring to the same cost and weather advantages cited by Mr Jack. The Scottish Secretary presented the

plan to the Scottish parliament's culture, tourism, Europe and external affairs committee, where he was giving evidence on Brexit. He told MSPs the project would be similar in length to the 31.4-mile Channel Tunnel and much shorter than tunnels in China.

Asked at a media briefing whether a bridge was still being considered, he said: "It's possible that you would have bridge-tunnel-bridge - we've seen examples of that elsewhere in the world."

"But I think the best solution if we're going to link Scotland and Northern Ireland is a tunnel. I've had conversa-

tions along those lines with the Prime Minister, who if you remember was keen on the idea when he went over and made a speech in Northern Ireland a number of years ago, and he has remained keen on the idea ever since."

He said a tunnel was the "sensible way forward" to address the problems around the weather and munitions dump, and tunneling costs had fallen.

Mr Jack said the next step would involve Mr Johnson announcing a full feasibility study, if he chose to press ahead. A 2030 deadline would be "quite achievable", he added.

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NEWS

Allies rally round Patel over claims of bullying

Priti Patel is a "tough, assertive and effective leader", say nearly 100 people who have worked with her, in a letter to *The Daily Telegraph* today. Replying to civil servants' allegations of bullying, figures from business, politics and academia say even under pressure the Home Secretary "never crossed the line or lost her temper" and claim she has been the target of a campaign of smears and malicious rumours by anonymous individuals who have failed to produce any verifiable facts. Page 10

COMMENT

Jemima Lewis

You can't correct history with retrospective gender quotas

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NEWS

It's official, rush-hour traffic now lasts all day

More traffic means that rush hour now lasts all day, a study by the Department for Transport has found. A narrowing in the time delay on a journey in the morning rush hour compared with 10am to 4pm has meant there is now little point leaving after the early peak. Travelling in morning traffic is only seven seconds slower per mile than in the middle of the day, and congestion on A-roads in England leaves motorists facing an average of 44 seconds in delays per mile every day. Page 13

WORLD

Majority of people are 'biased against women'

Almost 90 per cent of people are biased against women, according to a United Nations report that warns progress towards gender equality is "getting slower" in some areas. Despite progress in advancing women's rights, 91 per cent of men and 86 per cent of women hold at least one bias against women when it comes to politics, economics, education, domestic violence or reproductive rights. The figures were compiled using an index that analysed data from 75 countries. Page 14

BUSINESS

Rival airlines want to fill gap left by Flybe

Flybe's rivals scrambled to fill the void left by Europe's biggest regional airline yesterday, launching replacement services for half of its main routes within hours of the company's collapse into administration. Scottish airline Loganair took over 16 of the 45 core winter services previously run by Flybe, while Hull-based Eastern Airways took a further three. Channel Islands carrier Blue Islands said the 13 daily services it had run on Flybe's behalf would be uninterrupted. *Business, page 1*

