

Headline: [Japan finds new COVID-19 strain, while immigration centre reports infections](#)

Source: Reuters

Date: February 18, 2021

Notes: “Japan confirmed a new variant of COVID-19, and an infection cluster emerged at a Tokyo immigration facility, presenting new challenges as the country tries to overcome a third wave of the pandemic.” Authors report that the new variant has been found in 91 cases in the Kanto area of eastern Japan and in 2 cases at airports, and appears to have originated overseas. They report that “5 staff and 39 foreign detainees at a Tokyo immigration facility have tested positive for COVID-19,” while also noting that “Japan’s detention system for immigration law violators and asylum seekers has been widely criticized for its medical standards, monitoring of detainees and response to emergencies.”

Headline: [Humanitarian crisis looms on Chile-Bolivia border as migrants cross on foot](#)

Source: The Guardian

Date: March 9, 2021

Notes: Author Charis McGowan reports that even though Chile closed land borders in 2020 due to COVID-19, authorities are stating that there has been a surge in border crossings, mostly of Venezuelan migrants. McGowan reports that since the start of 2021, up to 200 migrants have entered Chile each day, crossing through a harsh landscape and equally harsh weather conditions. “Local authorities have struggled to accommodate the migrants. In the border town of Colchane – which has intermittent electricity, no supermarkets or pharmacies, and sits three hours from the closest city – travelers have been forced to shelter under plastic tarps.” McGowan highlights activists’ alarm at a looming humanitarian crisis at the Chilean-Bolivian border as the number of crossings on foot grow.

Headline: [Greece Sidelines Thousands of Asylum-Seekers in National Inoculation Drive](#)

Source: Voice of America

Date: March 7, 2021

Notes: “Illegal migrants and refugees in Greece will take a back seat in the nation’s coronavirus vaccination drive, the government in Athens has said, stoking concerns that more than 70,000 asylum-seekers, stuck in squalid living conditions, may become more vulnerable.” Author Carassava highlights that even though the government of Kyriakos Mitsotakis vowed last month to make asylum-seekers eligible for the vaccine, the government is deprioritizing “thousands of migrants and refugees stuck in some 30 camps across the country or left adrift without proper accommodation, waiting for years to have their asylum requests heard.” A government spokesperson stated that elders and vulnerable groups remain the priority.

Headline: [Greece: Moria camp will not be rebuilt](#)

Source: InfoMigrants

Date: March 5, 2021

Notes: “Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis has announced that the destroyed Moria migrant camp on Lesbos will not be rebuilt. A new structure elsewhere on the island will reportedly replace the temporary Kara Tepe camp.” Authors report that migrant aid organizations note that the conditions at Kara Tepe are far below minimum standards and “have called for the immediate evacuation of migrants to the mainland. Situated directly by the coast on a former military firing range, the Kara Tepe camp is exposed to the elements and heavy storms have repeatedly caused flooding and collapses of tents.” The temporary camp of Kara Tepe on Lesbos, which has been also dubbed ‘Moria 2.0’, holds about 7,000 people, with a maximum capacity of 10,000.

Related: [As a doctor in a European refugee camp, I found deep neglect and xenophobia](#)

Headline: [‘Tigers or crocodiles’: Grim prospects for Cambodian migrants at home and in Thailand](#)

Source: Reuters

Date: February 25, 2021

Notes: “While Cambodia has officially recorded less than 700 cases of COVID-19 and no deaths, the pandemic has taken a heavy toll on Cambodian communities in Thailand, with job losses, workplace shutdowns and coronavirus fears sending droves to the border.” Authors report that more than 150,000 Cambodians have returned home by official means since borders were shut in March 2020, but “finding scant work opportunities, increasing numbers are risking arrest to sneak back into Thailand.” Authors report that many are trying to leave Thailand “due to fears over the government crackdown, continued fallout from the pandemic on their jobs or simply tired of the discrimination they often face.”

Headline: [Yemen: UN migration agency calls for urgent humanitarian access after ‘horrific’ fire](#)

Source: UN News

Date: March 8, 2021

Notes: IOM has called for urgent humanitarian access to an overcrowded migrant detention center in Yemen's capital, Sanaa, “where a deadly fire reportedly led to multiple deaths at the facility at the weekend.” IOM has also called for the release of all migrants from the Immigration, Passports and Naturalization Authority Immigration Holding Facility, where many Ethiopian detainees were being held, along with “renewed commitment to providing safe, predictable movement options for migrants.” In the meantime, IOM has been “discussing the resumption of a humane voluntary returns process with the authorities in Sana’a.”

Related: [20 die after human traffickers force migrants into sea en route to Yemen](#)

Headline: [Covid-19 Vaccines: Deportation Fears May Be Limiting Uptake Among Undocumented Migrants In The U.K.](#)

Source: Forbes

Date: March 6, 2021

Notes: “British lawmakers have warned their government that fear of deportation may be stopping hundreds of thousands of undocumented migrants from getting vaccinated against COVID-19. Most vaccines are being distributed through family doctors (GPs). But many undocumented migrants are afraid to register with their local GP over fears their details will be shared with the Home Office.” Author Katherine Hignett reports on Health Minister Ed Argar’s assurance that the government will not “chase up” the immigration status of anyone receiving the vaccine. Hignett also reports that “a recent survey revealed that more than 40 percent of migrants in the U.K. were reluctant to access healthcare services, including registering with a family doctor, over concerns they will be charged or have their details shared with the government. That figure rose to 56 percent for people with refugee status, according to the [research by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants.](#)”

Related: [Covid: ‘No deportation risk’ for illegal migrants getting vaccination](#)

Related: [Refugees and undocumented migrants must be vaccinated, NGOs warn](#)

Headline: [One year on: How the pandemic has affected refugees, asylum seekers, and migration](#)

Source: The New Humanitarian

Date: March 10, 2021

Notes: Eric Reidy pursues an analysis on the effect of the pandemic on displaced populations and populations on the move, noting that it’s poverty and inequality that kills people, not the COVID-19 virus. “The impacts of the pandemic on these populations – from border closures, slumping economies, the overlapping of crises, increasing xenophobia, and the use of the virus as an excuse to restrict access to asylum – have been ‘far more pernicious.’” Reidy discusses inequity in vaccine access, too: “now, the highly unequal initial rollout of vaccines around the world has advocates and experts concerned that – barring some exceptions, like Jordan, where refugees are already being vaccinated – refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants will largely be an ought as countries push to inoculate their citizens first.”

Headline: [‘We’re not keeping up’: Biden administration scrambles to house children crossing the US-Mexico border alone](#)

Source: CNN

Date: March 2, 2021

Notes: “The Biden administration is racing to find space for the growing number of families and unaccompanied children crossing the US-Mexico border alone, which may include opening more temporary facilities and providing federal funding for COVID-19 testing. The Border Patrol had more than

1,300 children in custody waiting for placement by HHS on Tuesday, roughly a 300 person increase from the day before. To expand capacity, the agency opened a "soft-sided" structure in Donna, Texas, and is constructing another in Eagle Pass, Texas. At least four more "soft-sided" facilities are being considered, though locations haven't been nailed down."

Related: [After Border Patrol release, asylum-seekers test positive for Covid in Brownsville, Texas](#)

Related: [Biden Faces Challenge From Surge of Migrants at the Border](#)

Headline: [As Many Americans Get COVID-19 Vaccines and Financial Support, Undocumented Immigrants Keep Falling Through the Cracks](#)

Source: TIME

Date: March 8, 2021

Notes: In this piece, author LJ Dawson explores the potential impact of undocumented immigrants' immigration status on their ability to access COVID-19 vaccines and financial support during the pandemic. "Couples with mixed immigration status—in which only one partner is a U.S. citizen—were also blocked from aid until December. They can now apply for stimulus payments retroactively but will still receive less than couples who are U.S. citizens. Though the change made millions more families eligible for some aid, couples in which both partners are undocumented immigrants also have not received stimulus payments for their children even if their children were born in the U.S. and are citizens." Dawson highlights the growing advocacy for "inclusive" aid packages that provide direct aid to more immigrants regardless of citizenship status from organizations like the National Immigration Law Center.

Compiled by Sabeen Rokerya