

# Majorca Daily Bulletin

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Inside



## Rifts over COVID vaccines weigh on EU push to reopen summer travel



● Southern EU countries reliant on tourism and other proponents of the new COVID-19 certificate hope it would win final approvals in June and go online just in time for the peak season.

**Brussels.**—Six countries demanded more COVID-19 vaccines from the European Union yesterday, the latest setback to the bloc's troubled inoculation campaign that risks undermining plans to restart travel this summer to support the battered tourism sector.

Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Latvia and Slovenia raised concerns "on possible gaps in the vac-

cine distribution between member states", an EU official said, amid an acute squeeze of COVID-19 jabs the EU faces due to reduced deliveries by Astra-Zeneca.

Southern EU countries reliant on tourism and other proponents of the new COVID-19 certificate hope it would win final approvals in June and go online just in time for the peak season.

But with the number of EU COVID-related deaths above 550,000 and less than a tenth of the population inoculated, countries including France, Belgium and Germany have voiced scepticism.

EU countries will be under pressure to agree a common position swiftly for their 450 million people.

The task is further complicated by un-

certainty over whether those inoculated can transmit the virus, and public scepticism about vaccines. From fights over protective equipment and drugs to disjointed travel restrictions, the EU has often struggled to keep a united front in fighting the pandemic. Differences may re-emerge when national leaders discuss the latest ideas next week at summit.

### UK mulling vaccine passport options for at home and abroad, minister says

**London.**—Britain is reviewing the idea of vaccine certificates to allow access to travel, hospitality and entertainment and discussing the best way to proceed in terms of fairness, said business minister Kwasi Kwarteng.

P&O Cruises said on Tuesday that it would only accept as passengers those who have had both doses of the vaccine for its trips around the UK this summer, sparking a fresh debate on the issue.

When asked about the fairness of companies requiring proof of vaccination to grant entry and what the government's stance was on the matter, Kwarteng said it was under review.

"We are discussing

what the best way to proceed is," Kwarteng told the BBC.

More than half of Britain's adult population will have received the first shot of a COVID-19 vaccine by the end of the week.

## Health service was a smoking ruin, says Cummings

**London.**—Britain's health ministry was a "smoking ruin" last year that failed to secure adequate protective equipment and other

supplies early in the COVID-19 pandemic, Prime Minister Boris Johnson's former top aide said yesterday.

Dominic Cummings, Johnson's senior adviser until November last year, said Britain's more recent success in rolling out a

rapid vaccine programme was a result of a decision to take vaccine procurement out of the ministry's hands.



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