

Jabs at the AZ vaccine, Britain's comedy PM and more US hate

It's been an infuriating week or so for AstraZeneca and those hoping for a swift deployment of its Oxford vaccine.

First, fears of a link to blood clots saw many states pause their rollout of the jab before swiftly changing tack after its safety was confirmed. The moves will do little to boost confidence in the vaccine, which has been beset by PR problems. There was also the news that supplies of the vaccine to the UK were due to slump because of production issues in India and an ongoing row between the EU and UK about exports of vaccines. Do these struggles threaten - in the UK at least - to derail a mass vaccination programme that has helped dramatically reduce deaths since January's huge third wave?

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Dismissing the United Kingdom's prime minister as a clown is not, it ought to be noted, a completely original notion.

The man who was brought to the world's attention while stuck dangling from a zipwire before the 2012 Olympics has never had a completely serious reputation. But this week's cover story by Edward Docx forensically unpicks Boris Johnson's presentation and persona as a clown, in search of a true understanding of how a man seemingly so dedicated to not being serious ended up running Britain during its worst crisis since the second world war. **Send in the clown** *Page 34* →

As we went to press there was news of yet another mass shooting in the United States, this time in Colorado.

It came a few days after a gunman in Atlanta targeted Asian Americans in a series of shootings at massage parlours, prompting a national discussion about the hate directed at that community. Ed Pilkington asks why no one heeded the warnings after a year of escalating vitriol.

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