

Aid ship to Tonga reports 23 COVID cases



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Sydney, January 27 (RHC)-- At least 23 people on an Australian ship carrying aid to Tonga have tested positive for COVID-19. Planes have been used to unload supplies for the volcano-stricken island nation amid fears of spreading the coronavirus. So far, only one confirmed case has been reported in Tonga since the start of the pandemic.

Meanwhile, in Australia, health authorities approved the Novavax vaccine for adults amid an ongoing surge. It's expected to roll out next month. New Zealand has imposed its toughest restrictions yet after at least nine Omicron cases were detected.

In other news, officials in the Netherlands are loosening restrictions despite record cases, allowing bars, restaurants and theaters to reopen starting on Wednesday. Ireland also recently removed most of its COVID curbs, including curfews on hospitality venues and requiring proof of vaccination for patrons. Ireland's prime minister credited the high uptake of boosters for preventing a worse outcome during the Omicron surge.

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