

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

3rd Jul 2020

News Highlights

Increasing number of young Americans being infected by coronavirus

Preliminary evidence has indicated that Covid-19, which has killed close to 130,000 Americans, is especially lethal to the elderly and people with compromised immune systems. [However, new data indicates that young people are increasingly susceptible to the virus.](#) Half of all new infections in Arizona are among people aged 20 to 44 and the median age of those infected in Florida has dropped from 65 to 37 now.

Nigerian state ends lockdown months after suspected coronavirus killed hundreds

Weeks after other parts of the country eased restrictions, last Thursday, [the Nigerian state of Kano ended its coronavirus lockdown - months after an outbreak of what it called a 'mysterious disease' which killed over 500 people.](#) Local authorities did not acknowledge the outbreak at the time, but a government probe later found that the deaths were likely due to Covid-19.

Spike in deaths in major Indian city for deaths unrelated to Covid-19

[In the Indian city of Ahmedabad, figures obtained from Hindu cremation grounds and Muslim graveyards in April and May show a large spike in deaths not related to the coronavirus.](#) This suggests that a large number of people suffering from serious illnesses weren't able to get the treatment they needed, or were afraid of visiting hospitals for fear of catching the coronavirus.

England to use 'bubble' strategy to open schools in new normal

Students are expected to return to schools in England in September and the government has set out a strategy of dividing them into separate groups, known as bubbles, to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. [Students from one bubble will be encouraged not to mingle with students from other bubbles,](#) which could be the size of a class or year group.

Lockdown Exit

Will Europe or the US Recover Faster from Coronavirus?

After the devastating financial crisis of 2008 and 2009, the United States recovered much more quickly than Europe, which suffered a double-dip recession. This time, many economists say that Europe may have the edge. The main reason America did well was the rapid response of the government and the flexible nature of the American economy, quick both to fire workers but also to hire them again. Europe, with built-in social insurance, tries to keep workers from layoffs through subsidies to employers, making it harder to fire and more expensive to rehire. But this is a different kind of collapse, a mandated shutdown in response to a pandemic, driving down both supply and demand simultaneously. And that difference creates the possibility that the European response, freezing the economy in place, might work better this time.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/world/europe/coronavirus-europe-usa.html>

Uruguay rides out COVID threat without imposing a lockdown

Uruguay's president was recently photographed surfing in the early morning ahead of a cabinet meeting, symbolizing his government's relief that a policy of "freedom with responsibility" in containing the COVID-19 pandemic is succeeding. Photos of 47-year-old Luis Lacalle Pou emerging from the South Atlantic in a wetsuit with a board under his arm and a smile on his lips hit the newsstands on Tuesday, as Europe reopened its borders to 15 countries. The list included only one Latin American country: Uruguay. With less than 1,000 registered novel coronavirus cases and just 27 deaths, the country of 3.4 million is a notable exception in a region that has become the epicenter of the global health crisis. Uruguay currently has just 83 active cases, while its giant neighbor Brazil is the world's worst-hit country after the United States.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200702-uruguay-rides-out-covid-threat-without-imposing-a-lockdown>

Sweden's prime minister orders an inquiry into the failure of the country's no-lockdown coronavirus strategy

Sweden's prime minister has ordered an inquiry into the country's decision not to impose a coronavirus lockdown after the country suffered thousands more deaths than its closest neighbours. "We have thousands of dead" Swedish PM Stefan Lofven said at a press conference on Wednesday, while admitting the country's handling had exposed Sweden's shortcomings, The Times reported. "The question now is how Sweden should change not if"

<https://www.businessinsider.in/politics/world/news/swedens-prime-minister-orders-an-inquiry-into-the-failure-of-the-countrys-no-lockdown-coronavirus-strategy/articleshow/76751451.cms>

Young Americans are partying hard and spreading COVID-19 quickly

COVID-19 is increasingly a disease of the young, with the message to stay home for the sake of older loved ones wearing off as the pandemic wears on. The dropping age of the infected is becoming one of the most pressing problems for local officials, who continued Wednesday to set curfews and close places where the young gather. U.S. health experts say that they are more likely to be active and asymptomatic, providing a vast redoubt for the coronavirus that has killed almost 130,000 Americans. In Arizona, half of all positive cases are people from the ages of 20 to 44, according to state data. The median age in Florida is 37, down from 65 in March. In Texas's Hays County, people in their 20s make up 50 percent of the victims.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/07/02/world/young-americans-partying-coronavirus/>

Return to class to be reviewed 'day-by-day' as school spread widens

Victoria's Chief Health Officer will review the planned reopening of schools within Melbourne's locked-down suburbs as new evidence of recent student-to-student transmission of COVID-19 emerges. Professor Brett Sutton said he still expected schools in the lockdown zones to return to face-to-face learning at the start of term three, but that he wanted a reduction in transmission rates. "It will certainly be reviewed on a day-to-day basis. I will give as much notice as I can around the resumption of school in those restricted postcodes," Professor Sutton said. The Chief Health Officer said there was evidence of student-to-student and especially teacher-to-teacher transmission.

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/return-to-class-to-be-reviewed-day-by-day-as-school-spread-widens-20200702-p558da.html>

New Zealand health minister resigns after blunders

New Zealand's health minister has resigned after criticism of the government's response to coronavirus and his own breaches of lockdown rules. David Clark had already been demoted after breaking rules to take his family to the beach. He said continuing in his role was distracting from the government's overall response to the pandemic. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern confirmed on Thursday that she had accepted his resignation. New Zealand has been hailed as a success story when it comes to tackling the coronavirus. The country has recorded 1,528 confirmed or probable

coronavirus cases and 22 people have died. Last month, all Covid-19 restrictions were lifted and the nation was declared virus free.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-53259236>

New Zealand health minister David Clark resigns after breaking coronavirus lockdown to go mountain biking, passing the buck on border failures

New Zealand's health minister has resigned following a series of personal blunders during the coronavirus pandemic. David Clark had earlier described himself as an "idiot" for breaking the nation's lockdown measures and then last week appeared to blame a respected health official for border lapses, generating an angry response from the public. Announcing his resignation, Mr Clark said he had put all his energy into the job. "But it has become increasingly clear to me that my continuation in the role is distracting from the government's overall response to COVID-19," he said.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-07-02/coronavirus-new-zealand-health-minister-david-clark-resigns/12415410>

New Zealand health minister David Clark quits over handling of Covid-19 outbreak

New Zealand's health minister has resigned after a series of major missteps during the coronavirus crisis which saw him draw the ire of the public and the prime minister. Dr David Clark has held the health portfolio since Labour was elected in 2017 but has largely been viewed as an ineffectual minister who has struggled to make an impact during his term. During New Zealand's lockdown, Clark was twice discovered breaching the strict stay-at-home rules; once by going mountain biking, and a second time when he took his family for a beach trip 23km from his Dunedin home.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/02/new-zealand-health-minister-david-clark-quits-over-handling-of-covid-19-outbreak>

Lockdown has been eased too soon in the US - and was never strict enough - warns Dr Fauci as he slams young people hitting beaches, bars and protests infecting the vulnerable amid 'disturbing' spike in cases to over 52,000 a day

Anthony Fauci has warned that America's coronavirus lockdown was lifted too soon, was never strict enough in the first place, and that young people are driving a second wave that has seen daily infections top 50,000. Dr Fauci, the White House's top virus adviser, said the 'very disturbing' new rise in cases is being caused in part by the fact that the US never got its first wave under control - only locking down around 50 per cent of the country compared to 97 per cent as happened in most of Europe where daily infections are now very low. That meant that when the economy started to reopen, the virus began spreading rapidly almost immediately because there were still a large number infected people to pass the disease along, he told BBC Radio 4 in the UK.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8482593/Lockdown-eased-soon-never-strict-warns-Dr-Fauci.html>

Border town pays price for Sweden's no-lockdown as Norway reopens

The Swedish border town of Stromstad is paying a heavy price for Sweden's decision not to lock down its economy like neighbouring Norway and other Nordic nations to halt the spread of COVID-19. Stromstad is just a two-hour drive from Oslo and popular with Norwegians who shop for cheaper consumer goods in Sweden, but Norway's lockdown, imposed in mid-March, put a stop to that. And now, though Norway has lifted its lockdown following a sharp fall in COVID-19 cases, it still quarantines people returning from Sweden, which has registered more than four times the combined number of deaths in Norway, Denmark and Finland. "When Norway closed its borders, (Stromstad) went overnight from full activity to total stillness," said Kent Hansson, the town's mayor. "The border retail trade, it is (still) completely dead. The large supermarkets close to the border are completely deserted." Sweden kept most businesses and schools open when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, bucking the international trend.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-norway-sweden/border-town-pays-price-for-swedens-no-lockdown-as-norway-reopens-idUKKBN2431A9>

End of lockdown fails to boost jobs market in Spain

The end of the coronavirus lockdown in Spain failed to bring a surge in employment as government data showed that the 900,000 jobs lost at the pandemic's peak had not been regained, while the tourism sector has not yet returned to regular activity. The number of people in Spain registering as jobless rose by 0.13% in June from a month earlier, or by 5,017 people, leaving 3.86 million people out of work, Labour Ministry data showed on Thursday. The number of registered jobless people had risen in May by 0.68%. Overall there were 847,197 more jobless people in June than in the same month a year ago. A net 99,906 jobs were lost in June. According to data from the Social Security Ministry, on average 68,208 new jobs were registered in June compared to May, but 161,500 people were fired on the last day of the month.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-spain-economy-jobless/end-of-lockdown-fails-to-boost-jobs-market-in-spain-idUKKBN2430TN>

India's coronavirus cases cross 600,000 amid easing of lockdowns

India's coronavirus infections surpassed 600,000 on Thursday, with 17,834 deaths, as authorities battled to contain the pandemic while easing lockdown rules, officials and the health ministry said. Fresh challenges to protect people from the virus emerged for disaster management officials in the northeast state of Assam amid torrential rainfall, where floods and landslides killed 57 people this week and more than 1.5 million were forced to flee their homes. Assam's health minister, Himanta Biswa Sarma, said the state had started testing aggressively to identify coronavirus cases among villagers forced to take shelter in community halls, schools and government buildings. "We were isolating new coronavirus hotspots; the situation is very critical," Sarma told Reuters. The increase in infections presents a severe challenge for India's strained medical capacity and overburdened health system.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-india/indias-coronavirus-cases-cross-600000-amid-easing-of-lockdowns-idUKKBN2430HB>

Lockdown ends in Nigeria's Kano, where coronavirus killed hundreds

The Nigerian state of Kano ended its novel coronavirus lockdown on Thursday, the local ministry of health said, months after an outbreak of what was originally called a "mysterious disease" killed hundreds of citizens. The easing comes weeks after other parts of Nigeria relaxed restrictions, and marks an effort to resume everyday life in Kano, the commercial and cultural heart of predominantly Muslim northern Nigerian. In April and early May, roughly 500 people died in the state, a government probe found, saying the deaths were likely due to coronavirus. Local authorities did not acknowledge the outbreak at the time. Kano's health ministry on its official Twitter account did not provide details of the state lockdown ending except to say civil servants would return to work from July 6. The end of Kano's lockdown and other policies to relax restrictions come as coronavirus cases mount in Africa's most populous country.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-nigeria/lockdown-ends-in-nigerias-kano-where-coronavirus-killed-hundreds-idUKKBN24330Z>

Swiss restrict entry from 29 countries to prevent coronavirus spread

Travellers to Switzerland from 29 countries will from July 6 have to register with the authorities and go into self-isolation to prevent a resurgence of the coronavirus, the government said on Thursday. The list includes the United States, Sweden, Brazil and Russia, which have been designated as countries with a high risk of infection.

<https://www.todayonline.com/world/swiss-restrict-entry-29-countries-prevent-coronavirus-spread>

Other deaths spike in Indian city ravaged by COVID-19

A large Indian city badly hit by the coronavirus has recorded a sharp rise in deaths not attributed to the outbreak, according to official data and burial records, highlighting how the pandemic has

affected general healthcare. The spike in deaths in Ahmedabad, the most populous city in western Gujarat state, is due to patients with serious illnesses either not able to go to hospitals or being afraid to visit them because of the virus, doctors said. The numbers contain "ominous signals" for the rest of the country, said Dr Rajib Dasgupta, a professor of community health at New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University.

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asia/other-deaths-increase-indian-city-ravaged-by-covid-19-12894316>

Peru looks to restart economy after months-long lockdown

Peru entered the final stage of its economic reopening on Wednesday after ending a months-long lockdown to try and contain the spread of the novel coronavirus. The government said in a decree that "phase 3" of economic reactivation, which includes 96% of production activities, will restart all mining activities, industrial sectors and commerce, though they must comply with health protocols for the pandemic. Restaurants and shops will reopen to cater to a limited capacity of customers. Officials are also weighing health protocols for resuming domestic air and land transport. "The goal is to revive the economy and create jobs," said President Martin Vizcarra, speaking at an event to announce the purchase of 400 ventilators from China. At least 240,000 companies received an economic stimulus from the government to help them reopen, Vizcarra said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-peru/peru-looks-to-restart-economy-after-months-long-lockdown-idUSKBN2427CP>

Peruvians fill streets as lockdown ends despite infections

Blocks-long lines formed at bus stops, food markets and shopping centers in Peru's capital Wednesday as people left their homes en masse to go to work or shop as a 106-day coronavirus lockdown ended in many parts of the country. For the first time in months, food vendors offered breakfasts for 50 cents from street carts covered in clear plastic in Lima's historic center. Vendors hawked face shields and disinfectants outside crowded public markets. City workers cleaned statues with jets of water. "God always accompanies me," said 73-year-old newspaper deliverer Segundina Lolo when asked if she feared the virus with infection rates in the country still high and scientists warning against ending three months of strict stay-at-home orders too soon.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/peruvians-fill-streets-lockdown-ends-210600845.html>

Exit Strategies

'Bubbles' - How England plans to reopen schools to all pupils

All pupils in England will be expected to return to school in September as part of government plans unveiled on Thursday, which include dividing students into separate groups to limit the spread of COVID-19. Schools will be asked to maintain distinct student groups, known as bubbles, which strive to not mix with pupils in other bubbles. They could be the size of a class or a year group. This makes it easier to pinpoint who needs to self-isolate if there is a positive case and will keep that number to a minimum, the education ministry said. Officials acknowledge younger children will not be able to maintain social distancing and that could be challenging for everyone when using shared facilities such as dining halls, toilets and playgrounds.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-education/factbox-bubbles-how-england-plans-to-reopen-schools-to-all-pupils-idUKKBN2431HR>

Cuban capital to ease lockdown, joins rest of the country

Cuba said on Wednesday it will begin easing a pandemic lockdown on Havana on Friday, while most of the rest of the country will move to phase two of a three-phase process towards normalization. The capital's 2.2 million residents will once more be able to move around on public and private transport, go to the beach and other recreation centers, and enjoy a seaside drive just in time for the summer break. They can also dine and have a drink, although social distancing and wearing masks remain mandatory. Optional medical and other services will also resume. Only a handful of

COVID-19 cases were reported in Cuba last month, all but a few in Havana. Most of the Caribbean island, home to 11.2 million inhabitants, has been free of the disease for more than a month.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-cuba-lockdown/cuban-capital-to-ease-lockdown-joins-rest-of-the-country-idUKKBN24307L?il=0>

High-flying facemasks arrive at Mexican hospitals by drone

To eliminate the risk of contagious human beings, a Mexican company has launched a drone delivery service to get clean medical supplies to hospitals during the coronavirus pandemic. Mexico-City based firm Sincronia Logistica has begun deploying unmanned drones to deliver personal protective gear and other essential equipment to public hospitals in the central state of Queretaro, north of the capital. Mexican healthcare workers have staged protests nationwide over the lack of personal protective equipment. The drones help stem the spread of the novel coronavirus by allowing for quick, contact-free drop-offs. "In addition to reducing time, we've also reduced human contact," said Diego Garcia, director of business excellence at Sincronia Logistica. The innovation comes as the pandemic has surged in Mexico to give the country the sixth-highest death toll worldwide, with some 28,510 confirmed COVID-19 fatalities.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-mexico-drones/high-flying-facemasks-arrive-at-mexican-hospitals-by-drone-idUKKBN24335M>

How will schools return safely in September?

All pupils should be back in school in England by September under new government guidelines announced on Thursday by the education secretary. From the beginning of the autumn term, limits on attendance will be lifted to allow schools to open at full capacity, and schools and colleges are being asked to return to a full curriculum ahead of exams next summer. But, after several false starts, how will schools open safely to all pupils after the summer break according to the latest government blue print set out by Gavin Williamson on Thursday.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2020-07-02/how-will-schools-return-safely-in-september>

Partisan Exits

'Raise a glass': UK Treasury faces backlash after hailing pubs reopening

Many of those condemning the post, which was soon deleted, accused its celebratory tone of being in poor taste given that the virus has killed at least 43,000 people in the UK. The tweet came as Leicester was put back under lockdown conditions amid a localised outbreak and fears were expressed about numbers of cases being seen in Greater Manchester.

<https://www.theguardian.com/global/2020/jul/02/uk-treasury-faces-backlash-after-hailing-pubs-reopening-on-saturday>

High court hears legal challenge to England's lockdown restrictions

The government's lockdown, which has closed schools, premises and companies while limiting free movement, is the "most sweeping and far-reaching" restriction on fundamental rights since the second world war, the high court has been told. In a challenge to the legality of emergency legislation, the businessman Simon Dolan, whose Jota Aviation company has been delivering personal protective equipment (PPE) to the NHS, is testing the full extent of the powers under which England has been confined for the past 101 days. The hearing is taking place via video link due to the coronavirus crisis, with lawyers participating remotely from their homes or chambers. Lawyers for Dolan argue that the emergency restrictions, announced by the prime minister on 23 March, are illegal, breach human rights laws and fail to take account of other significant factors.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/02/high-court-hears-legal-challenge-to-englands-lockdown-restrictions>

Coronavirus news: Boris Johnson 'blind' to risk of lifting lockdown as more cities being monitored for spikes ahead of 'Super Saturday'

Labour has urged Boris Johnson to extend the government's furlough scheme, telling the prime

minister it could be the "last chance to save millions of jobs". It comes as more towns and cities are monitored for coronavirus spikes that could see them placed under local lockdowns. Ministers have faced criticism for the handling of the surge in cases in Leicester, which was put into the UK's first local lockdown on Tuesday. Australian authorities, meanwhile, will lock down about 300,000 people in suburbs north of Melbourne for one month from today after two weeks of double-digit rises in new Covid-19 cases.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/coronavirus-uk-update-live-news-today-latest-local-lockdown-a9594861.html>

New US lockdowns are a gross overreaction

For those with a taste for irony, this July 4 weekend will be one to remember. As Britons are finally liberated from months of lockdown tyranny, declaring their independence from imposed confinement with a pint in a pub, here in the former colonies the national holiday will be commemorated with renewed restrictions, tightened controls on movement and stern demands from our rulers to stay home. States that had emerged from lockdown in the spring are now responding to a resurgence in Covid-19 cases with a return to incarceration. In Texas, gyms, bars and restaurants that had been open for the past month have just been closed again. In the desert heat of Arizona the governor announced this week that there will be no going back to water parks for at least a month. In the past week total cases in the US have surged to more than 40,000 a day, the highest number since the virus first hit the country in the late winter, and so a growing number of states are reimposing restrictive measures. The economic and political ramifications of a renewed lockdown are far-reaching. If the new lockdown is an extended one, the damage to businesses that have managed to limp through the past few months could be terminal. President Trump, besieged by a summer of disease, disorder and depression, and seemingly unable to take his foot out of his mouth on any topic, had been counting, increasingly desperately, on a return to some kind of normality in time for November's election. That may be elusive.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/new-us-lockdowns-are-a-gross-overreaction-zg03tckcd>

As Britain emerges from coronavirus lockdown, Boris Johnson has lost public trust

In the past few days, the beaches of Dorset in southern England were so crammed with sunbathers, as 500,000 merrymakers flouted social distancing rules, that local councils declared an emergency. In Liverpool, ecstatic soccer fans celebrated a Premier League title in an enormous downtown mosh pit for two days, refusing to disperse and battling anti-riot squads. The mayor called it "heartbreaking." Meanwhile, in London, authorities have been scrambling to break up illegal "flash mob" street parties, complete with sound systems and DJs. Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick complained that some attendees were drunk and violent, and that all were selfish and reckless, "seeming not to care at all" about their own or their family's health. All this, and the pubs haven't even reopened. That happens Saturday.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/as-britain-emerges-from-coronavirus-lockdown-boris-johnson-has-lost-public-trust/2020/07/01/2c1d0f8c-ba2e-11ea-97c1-6cf116ffe26c_story.html

Israel FinMin opposes return to lockdown despite spike in infections

Israeli Finance Minister Israel Katz said on Wednesday he opposed returning to a nationwide lockdown despite a surge in new coronavirus cases, citing the economic pressures of a prolonged closure. "We will not compromise on health considerations but we will not return to a situation where the economy will be closed," Katz told a news conference. He argued that increased enforcement of existing rules, which include wearing masks and social distancing, was more reasonable for the time being than a shutdown.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-israel-economy/israel-finmin-opposes-return-to-lockdown-despite-spike-in-infections-idUSL8N2E84OP>

American lockdown exceptionalism

As the number of COVID-19 cases starts to rise again in many U.S. states, the question is whether residents of those states will tolerate another lockdown. I used to think so, but it is increasingly clear that Americans have become comfortable with a remarkably high number of casualties. There is a mechanism of social conformity at work here. Most people will not tolerate a small risk to their lives to dine out, for instance — but they might if all their friends are doing the same. The appeal of a restaurant isn't just the food, it's the shared experience and the sense that others are doing it, too. The danger lies in the potential for ratchet effects. If hardly anyone is eating out or going to bars, you might be able to endure the deprivation. But once others have started doing something, you will probably feel compelled to join them, even at greater risk to your life.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2020/07/01/commentary/world-commentary/american-lockdown-exceptionalism/>

Continued Lockdown

Sindh extends 'smart' lockdown until July 15 to control rising COVID-19 cases

On the recommendations of the Sindh government, the home department has extended the date of 'smart' lockdown throughout the province until July 15. The notification issued on Wednesday said that in continuation of the order issued on June 1 and "for the same reasons recorded therein" by the Sindh government under Section 3(1) of the Sindh Epidemic Diseases Act, 2014, the home department has extended the lockdown until July 15. The sectors that will remain closed are educational and training institutes, marriage halls, business centres, expo halls, all contact sport and indoor sports clubs, indoor gyms and sports facilities, sporting tournaments, restaurants, cafes (excluding takeaway and home delivery), theme, amusement parks and arcades, beauty parlours and spas, cinemas and theatres, public processions and gatherings of all nature, shrines, tourism and tourist hotels, and interprovincial transport. However, the intercity transport shall be opened as per the inputs from the Sindh Transport Department, keeping in view the petition by transporters in the high court.

<https://www.msn.com/en-xl/asia/pakistan/sindh-extends-smart-lockdown-until-july-15-to-control-rising-covid-19-cases/ar-BB16eyCC>

Colombia tops 100,000 coronavirus cases, nears 3,500 deaths

Colombia's confirmed coronavirus infections tipped across the 100,000 case threshold on Wednesday, as the country's quarantine measures roll on and intensive care units fill. Confirmed coronavirus cases now number 102,009, the health ministry said, 54,941 of which are active. Some 3,470 people have died. Wednesday also marked the highest-ever daily increase in confirmed cases with an uptick of 4,163.

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/07/02/colombia-tops-100000-coronavirus-cases-nears-3500-deaths.html>

'Cuddle curtains' are going global amid the coronavirus pandemic

Social distancing during lockdowns has ruined the beauty of the hug. But many people have come up with a way to hug safely, the "cuddle curtain." The idea has caught on and is now being seen across the world.

<https://www.cNBC.com/2020/07/02/cuddle-curtains-are-going-global-amid-the-coronavirus-pandemic.html>

French Guyana struggles with three-month Covid-19 lockdown measures as cases still on the rise

Almost two months after French government lift the coronavirus lockdown measures in mainland France, French Guyana has seen an alarming spike of Covid-19 cases and measures such as curfews were put back in place. The territory shares kilometres of borders with Brazil, the hardest-stricken country in Latin America. Meanwhile, the situation is "under control" in mainland France, the government says even though 200 clusters were identified.

<https://www.france24.com/en/video/20200702-french-guyana-struggles-with-three-month-covid-19-lockdown-measures-as-cases-still-on-the-rise>

Coronavirus cases spike in Serbia with 359 new infections | Daily Sabah

Serbia on Thursday reported 359 new coronavirus infections and six deaths, marking a new spike within a persistent upward trend which has forced the return of some restrictions on public life. The country had seemed to be on the verge of bringing the COVID-19 epidemic to a close, with the number of new cases in the low double-digits in late May and early June. But since then, new outbreaks have hit Belgrade and the town of Novi Pazar, where local health services were quickly overwhelmed. Infection numbers began to rise after the government fully relaxed restrictions, even becoming the first European country to allow spectators at football matches, with one game drawing a crowd of more than 20,000 people.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/world/europe/coronavirus-cases-spike-in-serbia-with-359-new-infections>

Scientific Viewpoint

People who stayed home before lockdown likely helped slow spread of COVID-19: Researchers

A new study has found that people who were proactive and stayed home even before lockdown orders were implemented in the United States may have helped slow the spread of the novel coronavirus back in March and April. The study, published Wednesday in the Lancet, shows that in the 25 most affected U.S. counties, people started staying home more than would be typical nearly a full week to a month prior to their state's stay-at home policies were put in place. The decrease in movement was strongly correlated with reduced COVID-19 case growth in those counties during March and April. This suggests that social distancing prior to policy enforcement played an important role in controlling the spread of the virus.

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/people-stayed-home-lockdown-helped-slow-spread-covid/story?id=71566229>

Coronavirus: Leicester lockdown 'risks creating uncertainty and disorder', scientists warn

The lockdown in Leicester was imposed too late and "risks creating uncertainty, dissent and even disorder", a group of scientists has warned. Independent SAGE - a rival group that is separate to the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies which advises Downing Street - described the local lockdown as a "foreseeable crisis of the government's own making". It said the situation in Leicester was "both predictable and avoidable" and that it expected to see "spikes" of infection in other towns and cities. The group said the Leicester coronavirus outbreak was a consequence of "the premature lifting of lockdown restrictions at a time when the virus is still circulating widely in some areas" and the lack of a functioning test, trace and isolate system in place.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-leicester-lockdown-risks-creating-uncertainty-and-disorder-scientists-warn-12019610>

How lockdown stopped the virus in Italy

Previous studies have shown that many severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) cases were tied to asymptomatic carriers or those who do not manifest symptoms of the viral infection. Now, a new study reveals that in the first Italian town hit by the virus, as much as 40 percent of the population had no symptoms of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The researchers at the University of Padua and Imperial College London revealed that many people in the town of Vo, northern Italy, and the first one to be locked down in Europe due to the coronavirus outbreak, had been infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, but did not display any symptoms. The results add to previous data that the number of those who had contracted the virus may be higher than what the official tally shows.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20200701/How-lockdown-stopped-the-virus-in-Italy.aspx>

Russian fund steps up production of anti-viral drug approved by Moscow for COVID-19

Russia's sovereign wealth fund said on Thursday it will step up the production of the anti-viral drug Avifavir, an anti-influenza medicine which the Russian government has granted preliminary approval for treatment of COVID-19 patients. The Russian health ministry gave its approval for the drug's use under a special accelerated process in May. Its Russian backers say it has shown a benefit in COVID-19 patients in early research. The first 100,000 treatment courses were delivered last month to 35 Russian regions, as well as to neighbouring Belarus, said the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) which has promoted the drug. RDIF said it was now set to produce more than 100,000 courses in July and that a joint venture with pharmaceutical firm ChemRar Group would allow it to increase production threefold to meet growing demand both domestically and internationally

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-russia-flights/update-1-russian-fund-steps-up-production-of-anti-viral-drug-approved-by-moscow-for-covid-19-idUSL8N2E93EP>

Locked down and liquored up: Research reveals the truth about Australians' drinking during COVID-19

Researchers at the University of South Australia's Ehrenberg Bass Institute for Marketing Science have found that despite predictions that the lockdown might cause a spike in alcohol consumption, the truth is, there was very little change in people's drinking habits during the restrictions. Not only did overall wine consumption rates remain reasonably stable, but people tended to buy their wine from the same places and drink wine on the same occasions. In a new paper—How has wine and alcohol purchasing and consumption changed during COVID-19 isolation in Australia? – UniSA researchers found that across red and white wine, beer and spirits, only 15 to 18 percent of respondents reported drinking more often than before lockdown. Between 82 and 85 percent of those surveyed were consuming none, less or about the same of all types of alcohol as they were before the lockdown.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-07-liquored-reveals-truth-australians-covid-.html>

South Africans unhappier than Australians, New Zealanders over lockdown experience

A comparative well-being study between South Africa, New Zealand and Australia has found that South Africans were the least happy with the strict lockdown regulations. Researchers performed the study to explore the effect that lockdown has had on people's happiness.

<https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/south-africans-unhappier-than-australians-new-zealanders-over-lockdown-experience-50235332>

China urges coronavirus testing capacity ramp-up in preparation for potential outbreaks

China's local governments and medical institutes should ramp up and reserve coronavirus testing capacity in preparation for increased demand amid potential outbreaks, national health authorities said on Thursday. Local authorities should have emergency response plans to be able to swiftly expand nucleic test capacity, the National Health Commission said in a guideline on its website. Nucleic acid test results should be delivered within six hours for patients at fever clinics and within a day for those who volunteer to be tested, according to the guideline.

<https://www.devdiscourse.com/article/health/1114617-china-urges-coronavirus-testing-capacity-ramp-up-in-preparation-for-potential-outbreaks>

Oxford COVID-19 vaccine safe for people with weak immunity says Oxford Professor Sarah Gilbert

Volunteers have begun participating in Brazil's first clinical trial of Oxford COVID-19 vaccine. The ChAdOx1 vaccine technology is based on an adenovirus and it is considered very safe, even in people with a weak immune system. "We have removed some of the adenovirus genes, so that when we use it as a vaccine, the adenovirus cannot spread through the body. That makes it very safe, even in people with a weak immune system. But because it is a live virus, it is good at inducing

a strong immune response after vaccination," said Professor Sarah Gilbert, Nuffield Department of Medicine, Oxford University. Gilbert gave a short talk while participating in an informal discussion with ambassadors of the UN member states.

<https://www.businessinsider.in/india/news/oxford-covid-19-vaccine-safe-for-people-with-weak-immunity/articleshow/6728237.cms>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Japan's capital sees biggest rise in coronavirus cases in two months

Tokyo confirmed 107 new coronavirus infections on Thursday, its highest daily tally in two months, but Japan's chief cabinet secretary said there was no need to reintroduce a state of emergency. Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike said about 70% of cases on Thursday were among people in their 20s and 30s. "It's really unpleasant that it is increasing somewhat. I'd like to ask all Tokyo residents and everyone at businesses for their cooperation to prevent that," she said. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters he didn't think there was a need for a fresh state of emergency. "We'll continue to pay attention to the infection situation in the area with a sense of urgency, and work to both prevent spreading of infection and support economic activity," he said. Officials have also said the medical system can handle existing infections and that increased testing partly explains the rise in confirmed cases.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-japan/japans-capital-sees-biggest-rise-in-coronavirus-cases-in-two-months-idUSKBN2430F9>

The Latest: South Korea worries as virus resurgence spreads

South Korea says it has confirmed 54 more COVID-19 cases as the coronavirus continues to spread beyond the capital region and reach cities like Gwangju, which has shut schools and tightened social restrictions after dozens fell sick this week

<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/latest-thailand-eases-restrictions-reopens-schools-71548488>

The Latest: South Korea worries as virus resurgence spreads

South Korea says it has confirmed 54 more COVID-19 cases as the coronavirus continues to spread beyond the capital region and reach cities like Gwangju, which has shut schools and tightened social restrictions after dozens fell sick this week. The figures reported Thursday brought the national case total to 12,904, including 282 deaths. Twenty-two of the new cases are in Gwangju, a southwestern city where infections were tied to various places, including office buildings, public libraries, welfare centres and a Buddhist temple. Twenty-three of the new cases came from the densely popular Seoul metropolitan area, which has been at the centre of a virus resurgence since late May amid increased economic activity and eased attitudes on social distancing.

<https://ca.finance.yahoo.com/news/latest-thailand-eases-restrictions-reopens-062027297.html>

Australia Thought the Virus Was Under Control. It Found a Vulnerable Spot.

Ring Mayar spends all day knocking on doors in the western suburbs of Melbourne, asking residents if they have a cough, a fever or chills. Even if they do not, he encourages them to get tested for the coronavirus, as the authorities race to catch up with a string of outbreaks that is threatening to recast Australia's success story in controlling the spread. "It's quite daunting," said Mr. Mayar, the president of the South Sudanese Community Association in the state of Victoria, who has been volunteering in one of the largely immigrant communities where cases are surging. The rise in infections — Victoria reported 77 new cases Thursday, the most since March — has driven home the outsized impact of the coronavirus on communities in which working-class immigrants and essential workers are particularly vulnerable to the disease. In these places, people often must venture out for jobs that put them at risk of contracting the virus, and communication by the authorities in residents' native languages can be patchy.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/02/world/australia/melbourne-coronavirus-outbreak.html>

Kazakhstan to implement softer second lockdown over COVID-19

Kazakhstan will close some non-essential businesses, limit travel between provinces, cut public transit hours of operation and ban public gatherings for two weeks starting from July 5, the government said on Thursday. The measures aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus in the Central Asian country may be tightened or extended later, the cabinet said in a statement

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-kazakhstan/kazakhstan-to-implement-softer-second-lockdown-over-covid-19-idUSS0N2DV00B>

Tokyo confirms 107 new cases of coronavirus

NHK has learned that more than 100 new cases of the coronavirus have been confirmed in Tokyo on Thursday. Tokyo Metropolitan Government officials say the number of new cases has reached 107. This is the first time since May 2 that the daily total has topped 100. It is also the highest daily figure since the state of emergency was lifted on May 25.

https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20200702_25/

New Lockdown

Leicester lockdown: Boohoo 'putting workers at risk of coronavirus'

Online fashion retailer Boohoo has defended its business practices after a workers' rights group said staff at Leicester factories that supply the group were at risk of coronavirus. The allegations came after a local lockdown was imposed on the city. Labour Behind the Label said workers were "being forced to come into work while sick with COVID-19". Boohoo said it had "terminated relationships" with factories over the treatment of workers. Labour Behind the Label said it had also received reports that workers who wished to isolate were being denied pay and factories had been operating illegally throughout lockdown.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-53263733>

Coronavirus: Threat of significant fines and jail time as Melbourne tightens lockdown rules

More than 300,000 people in Australia are going into lockdown for a month - with a neighbouring state threatening to fine or jail anyone who travels from coronavirus hotspots. More than 30 suburbs in Melbourne, in the state of Victoria, are going to face tightened restrictions for four weeks - prohibiting them from leaving home unless they are buying food, exercising, or have a health appointment. New South Wales (NSW), a nearby state that includes the cities of Canberra and Sydney, has now imposed measures designed to deter visitors from Victoria.

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-fines-or-jail-threatened-for-people-who-travel-outside-australia-covid-19-hotspot-12018567>

Australia steps up police patrols in Melbourne's locked down virus hotspots

Australian police set up suburban checkpoints in coronavirus hotspots in Melbourne on Thursday and were considering using drones to enforce stay-at-home orders as authorities struggled to contain new outbreaks in the country's second-largest city. More than 1,000 police set up posts around 36 suburbs, which returned to lockdown after a spike in new infections. While the rest of Australia opened state borders and loosened social distancing restrictions, Melbourne's state of Victoria promised to fine those in the affected zones that breached curbs on non-essential movement. Victoria reported 77 new cases, up slightly from the previous day and in line with weeks of double-digit daily increases.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-australia/australia-steps-up-police-patrols-in-melbournes-locked-down-virus-hotspots-idUKKBN24305X>

Uncertainty in the border zones as checkpoints ring locked-in suburbs

Closed cafes, checkpoints, quiet streets and a prevailing sense of uncertainty: welcome to the

borderlands - the places along the invisible line separating 10 locked-down postcode zones from the relative freedom of the outside world. "It's uncertain, especially on the first day," said Claudette, who runs Union Square Fish and Chips, which lies on the locked-down side of the Brunswick-Brunswick West postcode border.

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/licence-please-postcode-lockdown-begins-20200702-p55893.html>

Kazakhstan implements second lockdown after COVID cases surge

Kazakhstan will implement a second, softer lockdown for two weeks from July 5 to help combat a surge in coronavirus cases, the government said on Thursday. Authorities will close some non-essential businesses, limit travel between provinces, cut public transit services' hours of operation and ban public gatherings. The measures may be tightened or extended later, the cabinet said in a statement. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev ordered new curbs after coronavirus cases in the Central Asian country rose more than sevenfold following the lifting of its first, more restrictive lockdown in mid-May

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-kazakhstan/kazakhstan-implements-second-lockdown-after-covid-cases-surge-idUKKBN2430T2>

People attempting to flee Leicester lockdown zone could face £100 fine

People attempting to flee Leicester amid the local lockdown could face fines, police have warned. Amid widespread confusion about how the new rules will work, it has emerged that officers will issue fines — believed to be up to £100 — as a last resort for those who breach the coronavirus restrictions in the Midlands city. Nottinghamshire Police said it would be working with British Transport Police to ensure people are not leaving on trains from Leicester to visit Nottingham. Anyone spotted travelling out of Leicester will be stopped and asked to return home, with financial penalties issued as a 'last resort'. Craig Guildford, chief constable of Nottinghamshire Police, said his officers will also be working with Leicestershire Police, with any intelligence of minibuses or coaches coming into the city being stopped.

<https://metro.co.uk/2020/07/01/people-attempting-flee-leicester-lockdown-zone-face-100-fine-12928373/>