

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 30th Nov 2020

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### News Highlights

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#### **South Korea enforces restrictions amidst Covid spike**

South Korean authorities have announced a slew of new restrictions as Covid-19 cases spike in Korea, [a nation which won acclaim for its efforts in tackling the coronavirus early on](#). After 450 new infections were reported on Sunday, it was announced by Prime Minister Chung Sye-kyun that restrictions would be tightened on social gatherings.

#### **Third wave in the UK a possibility: Foreign Secretary**

Foreign Minister Dominic Raab warned a coronavirus third wave is a risk for the UK. ['There's a risk of that if we don't get the balance right.'](#) he said amidst the debate over restrictions possibly loosening over the Christmas period. Raab assured that the government is endeavouring to prevent another national lockdown.

#### **Indian economy shrinks further as Covid continues**

India has sustained further economic damage due to the effects of the pandemic. [India recorded a 7.5% economic contraction over the three months until September-end](#), compared to a year earlier. Millions of Indians are struggling to obtain economic relief - the country's worst recession since 1996.

#### **U.S. vaccine plan takes shape**

Health authorities in the U.S. are convening an emergency meeting to discuss plans for rolling out a coronavirus vaccine. Health workers and those in long-term care facilities are expected to be prioritised. [Many Americans remain either mandated or advised to avoid large gatherings and take added precaution if they have to travel](#), despite the promising vaccine news.

### Lockdown Exit

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#### **Malaria gains at risk from COVID-19 pandemic: WHO**

Funding shortfalls and disruptions to treatment in sub-Saharan Africa as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic risk tens of thousands more lives being lost to malaria, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned in its annual report on the mosquito-borne disease on Monday. The UN's health agency said it was concerned that even moderate disruptions in access to treatment could lead to a "considerable loss of life". A 10-percent disruption in access to effective anti-malarial treatment in sub-Saharan Africa could lead to 19,000 additional deaths, the report found. That number rose to 46,000 with a 25-percent disruption in access and 100,000 at 50-percent disruption. "Progress has stalled," said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa. "COVID-19 threatens to further derail our efforts to overcome malaria, particularly treating people with the disease. Despite the devastating impact COVID-19 has had on African economies, international partners and countries need to do more to ensure that the resources are there to expand malaria programmes which are making such a difference in people's lives."

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/30/malaria-gains-at-risk-from-covid-19-pandemic-who>

### **South Korea bans year-end parties, some music lessons, as virus spikes again**

South Korean authorities announced a ban on year-end parties and some music lessons on Sunday and said public saunas and some cafes must also close after coronavirus infections surged at their fastest pace since the early days of the pandemic. South Korea has been one of the world's coronavirus mitigation success stories but spikes in infections have reappeared relentlessly, triggering alarm in Asia's fourth-largest economy. Authorities reported 450 new infections on Sunday after more than 500 cases were recorded for three days in a row, the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency said. What authorities are calling a third wave of infections is spreading at the fastest rate in nearly nine months, driven by outbreaks at military facilities, a sauna, a high school and churches.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKKBN289027>

### **Raab: There is a risk of third coronavirus wave**

Britain is at risk of suffering a third wave of coronavirus infections if it does not get the approach to lockdown restrictions right in the coming weeks, foreign minister Dominic Raab said on Sunday. "There's a risk of that (if) we don't get the balance right," Raab told the BBC when asked about a possible 'third wave' resurgence of cases in January and February. He said the government was doing everything it could to avoid another national lockdown.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-raab/raab-there-is-a-risk-of-third-coronavirus-wave-idUKKBN2890B6>

### **South Australia and NSW record new Covid-19 cases as Victoria passes elimination benchmark**

A casual contact of a Covid-19 case is among two people newly diagnosed with coronavirus in South Australia, while New South Wales has announced eight new cases, all in hotel quarantine. Meanwhile, the ACT has recorded one new case in a returned traveller and Victoria has surpassed the benchmark for eliminating coronavirus, recording a 29th straight day without a single new infection.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/nov/28/south-australia-and-nsw-record-new-covid-19-cases-as-victoria-passes-elimination-benchmark>

### **More shops open as France starts easing virus lockdown measures**

France and other parts of Europe reopen "non-essential" stores on Saturday in time for the holiday season after progress in containing the coronavirus pandemic. Most countries hope to ease their virus rules for Christmas and New Year, allowing families a respite before bracing for what the world hopes is one last wave of restrictions until a clutch of promising new vaccines kick in. Stores selling non-essential goods will lift their shutters in France on Saturday, though bars and restaurants will remain shut until early next year.

<https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20201128-more-shops-open-as-france-starts-easing-virus-lockdown-measures>

### **Shops reopen in France as national lockdown eases**

Queues formed outside hairdressers' shops and department stores sold gifts and Christmas decorations on Saturday as France partially reopened after a month-long lockdown. Shops selling non-essential goods, such as shoes, clothes and toys, reopened in the first easing of national restrictions since 30 October. Bars and restaurants remain closed until 20 January. As a condition for reopening, the government reduced the number of people allowed in shops. Many small business owners complained it was hard to operate under the new rules

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/28/shops-reopen-in-france-as-national-lockdown-eases>

### **How 'Dictator Dan' Defied a Dangerous Murdoch Media and Led Australia to COVID Victory**

Australia is on the verge of eliminating the Coronavirus now that the epicentre of its second wave -

Melbourne - has recorded its twenty-eighth consecutive day of no new cases. It is a milestone epidemiologists say signals the elimination of COVID-19 in the community, leaving the city of five million residents now without a single active case. The land of Down Under has become the world's benchmark for managing the pandemic: following the science, placing faith in bona fide public health experts and rejecting the kind of unthinking, know-nothing, right-wing populism pushed by Rupert Murdoch-employed pundits in the media and members of the country's right-wing Government, the Liberal Party.

<https://bylinetimes.com/2020/11/27/how-dictator-dan-defied-a-dangerous-murdoch-media-and-led-australia-to-covid-victory/>

### **Queues at barber shops as France eases coronavirus lockdown**

People eager to get a haircut stood in line outside barber shops and department stores selling gifts and Christmas decorations were busy on Saturday as France partially reopened following a month-long lockdown. Shops selling non-essential goods such as shoes, clothes and toys reopened in the first easing of a nationwide lockdown that started on Oct. 30 and will remain in place until Dec. 15. Bars and restaurants remain closed till Jan. 20,

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france-shops/queues-at-barber-shops-as-france-eases-coronavirus-lockdown-idUKKBN2880GJ>

### **India's Economy Shrinks Sharply as Covid-19 Slams Small Businesses**

The latest data firmly establishes India's position among the worst-performing major economies, despite government spending meant to blunt the pandemic's impact.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/business/economy/india-economy-covid-19.html>

### **India falls into recession as pandemic weighs on output**

India's economy contracted 7.5 per cent year-on-year in the quarter ending September, taking it into a technical recession as strict lockdown measures to deal with the coronavirus pandemic continued to weigh on output. The performance was better than many analysts had forecast but still reflected the heavy blow the pandemic has delivered to what was recently the world's fastest-growing large economy. India's output contracted by a record 24 per cent year-on-year in the April to June quarter, when much of the economy was shuttered by a strict lockdown, but activity has since picked up somewhat after businesses and industry were allowed to reopen. A recession is defined as two consecutive quarters of negative growth.

<https://www.ft.com/content/33659ed3-cf15-4e93-9128-727d24759225>

## **Exit Strategies**

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### **Italy loosens COVID restrictions in five regions, including Lombardy**

The Italian government will ease anti-COVID restrictions in five regions from Sunday, including in the country's richest and most populous region Lombardy, the Health Ministry said. Lombardy, Piedmont and Calabria will be downgraded from red to orange zones, while Sicily and Liguria will drop from the orange to the yellow zone, which has least restrictions. Friday's decision follows a gradual decline in hospitalisations from coronavirus in much of Italy over the past week, with the number of new cases also retreating from highs seen earlier this month.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-italy-regions-idUKKBN2872C6>

### **Italy Eases Restrictions for Milan, Turin With Outbreak Slowing**

Italy's government will ease restrictions for financial capital Milan and for industrial hub Turin starting on November 29, following a steady reduction in the number of coronavirus cases. Health minister Roberto Speranza signed a new order Friday which will allow more movement and economic activities in five Italian regions, according to a statement. Italy has to date avoided imposing a second full nationwide lockdown, arguing its fragile economy must be shielded from

another body blow following a strict three-month shutdown last spring. Instead, the government of Giuseppe Conte has opted for a three-tier system that sets varying limitations by region.

<https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/italy-eases-restrictions-for-milan-turin-with-outbreak-slowing-1.1528652>

### **Austrians to face further 'massive restrictions' after lockdown - Kurz**

Austria should expect further heavy restrictions when its current lockdown measures expire in just over a week, Chancellor Sebastian Kurz told Austrian paper Kleine Zeitung. Austria's nationwide lockdown is due to be lifted on Dec. 7, but it is not yet clear what that will mean for the ski industry - cornerstone of a tourism sector which accounts for some 15% of economic output - or overall life in Austria. Speaking to Kleine Zeitung, Kurz said Austrians would need to contend with further restrictions for weeks and months, adding new measures to be announced on Wednesday depended on COVID-19 case developments.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/instant-article/idUKKBN2890C6>

### **'COVID-passport' for tourists who have had a coronavirus vaccine is in final stages of development amid reports airlines will BAN anyone who has refused the injection**

A leading travel industry association is developing a digital passport for international plane passengers who have been vaccinated for COVID-19. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) said Saturday that it is in the final phase of developing the infrastructure for the passport, which could become an essential component in rebuilding the shattered tourism industry. 'Testing is the first key to enable international travel without quarantine measures. The second key is the global information infrastructure needed to securely manage, share and verify test data matched with traveler identities in compliance with border control requirements,' Alexandre de Juniac, IATA CEO, said

[https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8996725/Vaccination-passport-tourists-COVID-19-shot-development.html?ito=social-twitter\\_mailonline](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8996725/Vaccination-passport-tourists-COVID-19-shot-development.html?ito=social-twitter_mailonline)

### **Nadhim Zahawi appointed minister in charge of Covid-19 vaccine rollout**

Nadhim Zahawi, a minister for business and industry, has been placed in charge of overseeing the deployment of the Covid-19 vaccine, Downing Street has announced. No 10 said the Stratford-on-Avon MP would take on the role until at least next summer. Zahawi will temporarily relinquish responsibility for most areas of his brief at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Under the interim arrangement, he will serve as a joint minister between BEIS and the Department for Health and Social Care. Hospitals in England have been told to prepare for the rollout of a coronavirus vaccine in as little as nine days' time, with NHS workers expected to be the first to receive the jab.

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/nov/28/nadhim-zahawi-appointed-minister-in-charge-of-covid-19-vaccine-rollout>

### **'A Christmas not like others': Europe wrestles with festive Covid rules**

It will have to be, Emmanuel Macron said this week, "a Christmas not like others". Across Europe, governments are grappling with the same question: how to allow a little much-needed seasonal celebration without further fuelling the pandemic? Some countries have yet to announce their plans, but several have already said tight restrictions can be eased for a short time over the festive period - providing people are responsible, and prepared to put up with tight measures before and after.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/27/christmas-not-like-others-europe-wrestles-festive-covid-rules>

### **Towns and villages could be 'decoupled' from nearby coronavirus hotspots**

In England, the government is reportedly considering plans to allow towns and villages to be "decoupled" from nearby coronavirus hotspots. Rural areas with low levels of Covid-19 infections could be removed from the tier 2 and 3 restrictions they were placed under because of their proximity to cities with high numbers of cases, The Daily Telegraph reports. The tier system of

restrictions is expected to remain in place for several months in an attempt to drive down the rate at which the virus is spreading throughout England.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/coronavirus-tier-system-towns-villages-decoupled-b1763084.html>

### **Ireland to lift COVID-19 curbs ahead of many European countries**

Ireland will allow shops, restaurants, gyms and pubs serving food to reopen next week, and permit travel between counties from Dec. 18, to facilitate a "different but special" Christmas, Prime Minister Micheal Martin said on Friday. Ireland became one of first European countries to reimpose tough COVID-19 constraints six weeks ago when the government shut non-essential retail and limited pubs and restaurants to takeaway service under its highest level of restrictions. From Tuesday, however, the economy will begin to be one of the most open across Europe after a sharp cut in the 14-day incidence rate per 100,000 people to below 100, behind only Finland and Iceland across the continent.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-ireland/ireland-to-lift-covid-19-curbs-ahead-of-many-european-countries-idUSKBN2872E0>

### **U.S. vaccine plans take shape but no let-up on restrictions**

U.S. health authorities will hold an emergency meeting next week to recommend that a coronavirus vaccine awaiting approval be given first to healthcare professionals and people in long-term care facilities. The meeting, announced on Friday by a U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) committee on immunizations, suggests that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) may be close to authorizing distribution of the long-awaited medication, at least to those considered most vulnerable.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-usa/us-vaccine-plans-take-shape-but-no-let-up-on-restrictions-idUSKBN28728Z>

### **MPs raise concerns over vaccine supply after Pfizer shuts cold storage site**

Concerns have been raised about the risk of disruption to supplies of the Pfizer coronavirus vaccine and added costs after the drugs company shut a cold storage facility in the south of England ahead of the end of the Brexit transition period next month. Britain has ordered 40 million doses of the vaccine from Pfizer and BioNTech, its German partner, which unveiled breakthrough interim results from a late-stage trial this month. Operations at a Pfizer vaccine packaging and distribution plant in Havant have been winding down before a transfer to a manufacturing site at Puurs in Belgium in October

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/mps-raise-concerns-over-vaccine-supply-after-pfizer-shuts-cold-storage-site-7pv57ztrr>

## **Partisan Exits**

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### **Covid: PM agrees to publish data behind England's new tier system**

Boris Johnson has agreed to publish the health, economic and social data behind England's new tier system later, as he seeks to avert a Commons rebellion. MPs will vote on the measures on Tuesday, and numerous Conservative MPs have demanded to see the data the government is basing its new system on. Writing to members of the Covid Research Group of MPs - who are sceptical of the new rules - Mr Johnson asked them to show "unity and resolve".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-55125712>

### **UK police arrest 155 in anti-lockdown protests in London**

Police in London said on Saturday that they had made 155 arrests as they tried to break up anti-lockdown and anti-vaccine protests. The police said the arrests had been made for different offences including assaulting a police officer, possession of drugs and breaching coronavirus restrictions.

England's current lockdown ends on Dec. 2. Earlier police lined up in a number of streets in central London's West End shopping district and confronted crowds of protesters in St James's Park, near Westminster. The anti-lockdown protesters were joined by groups who oppose a COVID-19 vaccine. One police officer estimated the protesters, who held up signs saying "Defend Freedom, Defend Humanity", "No more lies, no more masks, no more lockdowns", numbered between 300 and 400.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-protests/uk-police-arrest-over-60-in-anti-lockdown-protests-idUSKBN2880KY>

### **Coronavirus UK: Riot police clash with violent anti-lockdown protesters in central London**

Central London descended into anarchy today as riot police arrested 155 angry anti-lockdown demonstrators as thousands took to the streets and booed officers while chanting 'shame on you'. Dozens of violent anti-lockdown activists clashed with police while thousands more gathered in the capital amid growing discontent with the government's new tier system to be introduced on December 2. Up to 100 Tory backbenchers are threatening to rebel against Boris Johnson's draconian new tier regime next week.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8995941/amp/Coronavirus-UK-Anti-lockdown-protestor-bursts-tears-police-arrest-him.html>

### **Police arrest dozens of anti-lockdown protesters in London**

More than 150 people have been arrested as anti-lockdown protesters clashed with police in central London after officers sought to break up the demonstration. The Metropolitan police said 155 arrests were made for offences including breaching coronavirus regulations, assaulting a police officer and possession of drugs. In often chaotic scenes, hundreds of demonstrators, including a man dressed as Santa Claus, descended on the city centre on Saturday afternoon, chanting "freedom" and causing traffic disruption.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/28/met-police-anti-lockdown-protest-london>

### **How anti lockdown protests are being organised using encrypted secret messaging service**

As Liverpool was placed in Tier three and then the second UK-wide lockdown came into force on November 5, demonstrators opposed to restrictions marched through the city in defiance of the lockdown. Pre-prepared banners and live streaming on social media platforms like YouTube revealed well coordinated operations planned in advance that targeted specific gathering points in the city. But the protests were not just confined to Liverpool as similar organised demonstrations in London, Manchester, Bournemouth and Bristol have taken place. The UK-wide protests are being organised in advance and coordinated through a secure messaging service called Telegram.

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/newsliverpool/how-anti-lockdown-protests-are-being-organised-using-encrypted-secret-messaging-service/ar-BB1br4Ey>

### **Coronavirus: Piers Corbyn to stand trial over London anti-lockdown protests**

Piers Corbyn is to stand trial on charges that he violated the rules of the first coronavirus lockdown by attending two anti-shutdown protests in London in May. The former Labour Party leader's brother will appear at Westminster Magistrates' Court on Friday. Mr Corbyn has denied the charges, and says his defence is his right to freedom of expression and protest. He also faces fresh criminal charges that are listed for a case management hearing on Friday afternoon, alongside his impending trial. These charges relate to an anti-lockdown protest held in Leicester Square on 5 November, the first day of England's second national shutdown, and the date of the annual Million Mask March.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/coronavirus-piers-corbyn-lockdown-trial-latest-b1762571.html>

### **How an anti-lockdown 'truthpaper' bypasses online factcheckers**

When the factcheckers tried to find the source of a viral photo that was spreading across Facebook, they were confused. The picture - which had been uploaded by users in the UK, US, Australia and

elsewhere in the world - showed a headline that made the false claim that a US government agency had declared Covid-19 did not exist. It appeared to be from a real print newspaper, but no credible outlet would publish such a claim. It turned out the headline was from a new self-published conspiracy theorist "truthpaper" called the Light, edited by a man from Manchester who runs a business selling anti-vaccine T-shirts and 9/11 conspiracy merchandise. The outlet, which has published three issues since it first appeared in September, draws heavily on the gloop of long-running online conspiracies about a new world order, which have attached themselves to the current pandemic. Among other things it encourages people to stop wearing masks and disobey lockdown on the basis that the coronavirus is a hoax.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/27/truthpaper-the-anti-lockdown-newspaper-bypassing-online-fact-checkers>

### **Here's why pubs reopened in July - and why it's different now**

The UK's hospitality industry is not happy with the new Covid-19 plan to be adopted from December 2 in England. On the opposite end of the debate, academics and doctors have expressed reservations about pubs being allowed to reopen at all. Neil Ferguson, an Imperial College epidemiologist and former government adviser, suggested that the decision might lead to a rise in infection levels. The decision to reopen pubs on July 4 was taken after a data-crunching tool built by British artificial intelligence firm Faculty flagged up that "large numbers of pubs" risked going out of business due to the lockdown restrictions, according to Faculty's chief operating officer Richard Sargeant.

[https://www.wired.co.uk/article/pubs-open-tier-2-lockdown?utm\\_medium=Social&utm\\_source=Twitter&utm\\_campaign=SocialFlow](https://www.wired.co.uk/article/pubs-open-tier-2-lockdown?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter&utm_campaign=SocialFlow)

## **Continued Lockdown**

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### **Covid infections in England fall by 30% over lockdown - React study**

Coronavirus infections in England have fallen by about a third over lockdown, according to a major study. Some of the worst-hit areas saw the biggest improvements - but, despite this progress, cases remained high across England. Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the data showed the country could not "take our foot off the pedal just yet". The findings by Imperial College London were based on swabbing more than 100,000 people between 13-24 November. The React-1 study is highly respected and gives us the most up-to-date picture of Covid-19 in the country.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-55124286>

### **France must review COVID-19 crowd limits on church attendance**

France's State Council, the country's highest court, on Sunday ordered the government to review a law limiting the number of people in churches during religious services to 30. The Council said in a statement that the measure was not proportionate to coronavirus infection risks. Last week, the government announced that a nationwide lockdown in place since Oct. 30 would be unwound in phases.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france-religion/france-must-review-covid-19-crowd-limits-on-church-attendance-idUSKBN2890C9>

### **Covid: Has England's lockdown worked?**

Covid tiers: large parts of England in tier 3 restrictions after lockdownThe GuardianUK: Lockdown to end on Dec. 2, says PM Boris JohnsonAnadolu AgencyCovid-19 tiers: Almost all of England facing tough virus rulesBritain to detail post-lockdown restrictions in EnglandReutersView Full coverage on Google News

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-55103165>

### **Covid: Hospitals could be overwhelmed without new tiers, says Gove**

Hospitals in England could become "overwhelmed" with Covid cases if MPs do not back new restrictions, Cabinet Office Minister Michael Gove has said. Many Tory MPs oppose the tougher tier system, which begins on 2 December. But writing in the Times, Mr Gove said MPs - who will vote on the measures next week - need to "take responsibility for difficult decisions". Labour is yet to decide whether it will support the new restrictions. It has warned, however, that areas in tier three will be stretched to "breaking point" without further financial support from the Treasury. It comes as a further 479 deaths within 28 days of a positive test were reported in the UK, bringing the total to 58,030. There were also a further 15,871 positive cases registered in the past 24 hours.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-55112078>

### **Germany hits 1 million COVID cases as lockdown rules are extended**

More than 1 million people across Germany have been infected with coronavirus, officials revealed on Friday. The Robert Koch Institute, the country's disease control center, said 22,806 cases were reported the previous day across the nation's 16 states, bringing the total number of reported infections to 1,006,394. The grim milestone was announced the same day officials revealed Germany had recorded its second consecutive record daily death toll overnight.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/germany-hits-1-million-covid-cases-as-lockdown-rules-are-extended/ar-BB1bqdFw>

### **Coronavirus: Germany should not ease lockdown over Christmas, says top doctor**

Uwe Janssens, president of the German Interdisciplinary Association of Critical Care and Emergency Medicine, told DW on Friday that easing lockdown restrictions would put a huge strain on the health care system. "We currently have infection rates above 20,000 per day," Janssens explained. "And although we have a lot of intensive care beds in Germany, there is a great strain on the intensive care units at the moment." This week, Germany announced an extension of lockdown measures until December 20. But restrictions are expected to loosen over Christmas, allowing more family members to meet. "We understand that people will meet together, but we really think it is not a good idea to allow 10 people to come together," Janssens said, citing the number that Chancellor Angela Merkel mentioned in her announcement of the way forward on Wednesday.

<https://www.dw.com/en/coronavirus-germany-should-not-ease-lockdown-over-christmas-says-top-doctor/a-55751600>

### **Pandemic inflames violence against women**

No country has been spared the coronavirus epidemic, nor the scourge of domestic violence, which has surged during lockdowns. From a spike in rapes in Nigeria and South Africa, increased numbers of women missing in Peru, higher rates of women being killed in Brazil and Mexico and overwhelmed associations in Europe: the pandemic has aggravated the plague of sexual violence. According to UN data released in late September, lockdowns have led to increases in complaints or calls to report domestic abuse of 25% in Argentina, 30% in Cyprus and France and 33% in Singapore. In essentially all countries, measures to limit the spread of the coronavirus have resulted in woman and children being confined at home. "The house is the most dangerous place for women," Moroccan associations noted in April as they pressed authorities for "an emergency response".

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/11/28/world/social-issues-world/pandemic-violence-against-women/>

### **Lithuania extends lockdown as COVID-19 cases surge**

Lithuania on Wednesday extended its coronavirus lockdown until Dec. 17, when the new government is expected to take over. The outgoing government said the lockdown had stabilised new infections at about 11,000 per week, twice as high as during the week of Nov. 4 when the three-week lockdown was announced. "The spread has slowed somewhat, but the situation remains really serious," Health Minister Aurelijus Veryga said during a televised cabinet session.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/healthcare-coronavirus-lithuania-idINKBN2851P4>

### **German minister says partial lockdown could last until Spring 2021**

Germany's partial lockdown measures could be extended until early Spring if infections are not brought under control, Economy Minister Peter Altmaier said in a newspaper interview published on Saturday. Altmaier told Die Welt it was not possible to give the all-clear while there were incidences of more than 50 infections per 100,000 inhabitants in large parts of Germany.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-germany/german-minister-says-partial-lockdown-could-last-until-spring-2021-idUKKBN2880A1>

### **Maharashtra Covid-19: Existing lockdown restrictions extended till Dec 31**

The Maharashtra government on Friday extended the lockdown on account of coronavirus in the state till the midnight of December 31, 2020, an official release said. In the last couple months, the government has eased several lockdown restrictions

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/maharashtra-existing-lockdown-restrictions-extended-till-dec-31/articleshow/79449802.cms>

### **Scientific Viewpoint**

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#### **Singaporean mother gives birth to baby with COVID-19 antibodies**

A Singaporean woman who was pregnant when she was infected with coronavirus in March has reportedly given birth to a baby with antibodies against the disease, offering a new clue as to whether the infection can be transferred from mother to child. The baby, who was born this month, does not have COVID-19 but has the virus antibodies, the Straits Times newspaper reported on Sunday, citing the mother.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/29/singaporean-mother-gives-birth-to-baby-with-covid-19-antibodies>

#### **Breakingviews - AstraZeneca's messaging warrants a review, too**

In the current environment, careful communication is critical. As many as 40% of Americans are unwilling to take a Covid-19 vaccine, according to an October Gallup poll. Although drug giants have vowed not to profit from coronavirus jabs during the pandemic, the speed of the vaccine rollouts itself breeds wariness. Things will get even more awkward if AstraZeneca's new review finds its vaccine is less useful than assumed. Investors will be watching, too. AstraZeneca's shares have fallen nearly 5% since it revealed its results on Monday. Big Pharma valuations are based on the ability to deliver new blockbuster drugs and developing a track record for delivering on your pledges is an integral part of the mix. AstraZeneca should bear that in mind when it gets the results of its latest review back.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-astrazeneca-breaki/breakingviews-astrazenecas-messaging-warrants-a-review-too-idUKKBN28714L>

#### **UK secures two million more doses of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine**

Britain has secured two million doses of Moderna Inc's COVID-19 vaccine candidate, to be available in Europe as early as the spring, the government said on Sunday, in addition to the 5 million doses it secured from the U.S. company two weeks ago. The new deal came a day after Prime Minister Boris Johnson named Nadhim Zahawi, a junior business minister, to be minister responsible for the deployment of COVID-19 vaccines. Britain now has access to enough doses of Moderna's vaccine candidate for around 3.5 million people. Overall, it has access to 357 million doses of vaccines from seven developers, according to government statement.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-vaccine/uk-secures-two-million-more-doses-of-modernas-covid-19-vaccine-idUKKBN28903M>

#### **CDC panel meets Tuesday to vote on COVID-19 vaccine priority**

A panel of U.S. advisers will meet Tuesday to vote on how scarce, initial supplies of a COVID-19 vaccine will be given out once one has been approved. Experts have proposed giving the vaccine to health workers first. High priority also may be given to workers in essential industries, people with

certain medical conditions and people age 65 and older. Tuesday's meeting is for the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, a group established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The panel of experts recommends who to vaccinate and when -- advice that the government almost always follows. Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech have asked the Food and Drug Administration to allow emergency use of its COVID-19 vaccine candidate. Moderna Inc. is expected to also seek emergency use of its vaccine soon.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/cdc-panel-meets-tuesday-to-vote-on-covid19-vaccine-priority-panel-panel-atlant-a-ap-cdc-b1763098.html>

### **UK regulator set to approve Covid-19 vaccine next week**

The UK is poised to become the first western country to approve a Covid-19 vaccine, with the independent regulator set to grant approval within days. Deliveries of the vaccine developed by BioNTech and Pfizer would begin within hours of the authorisation, according to government officials. The first injections could take place from December 7. The UK has ordered 40m doses of the two-shot product, which preliminary data found to be more than 95 per cent effective in preventing disease. Vaccines would normally be authorised by the European Medicines Agency until the end of the Brexit transition on December 31. However the UK's Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency has the power to temporarily authorise products, in cases of urgent public need.

<https://www.ft.com/content/ebd9ca50-c2d7-4b0e-afd5-e90e93c0c495>

### **GPs step up in 2020 to tackle Covid-19**

After the toughest year ever for general practice, Nicola Merrifield reflects on how GPs have stood up to be counted. This year's battle with Covid-19, has meant GPs have had to be more dedicated and adaptable than ever. They have taken on new ways of remote working and run outdoor or socially distanced clinics, often with smaller teams due to staff self-isolating. There has also been a monumental effort to maintain normal services as far as possible, at a time when GP numbers continue to fall - down by 1.2% on last year, with 334 fewer full-time-equivalent GPs in England, according to the latest official NHS data from September.

<https://www.pulsetoday.co.uk/analysis/coronavirus/gps-step-up-in-2020-to-tackle-covid-19/>

### **SAGE says UK coronavirus cases may double in Christmas lockdown ease**

SPI-M-O group warned of massive surges in infections as a result of Christmas This would be because people will mix with those they would not normally see Britons will be able to meet with others from up to three different households

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8993883/SAGEs-gloomy-Xmas-warning-doubling-infections-five-days.html>

### **Why Oxford's Covid-19 vaccine could do more for the world than other shots**

In the days since Oxford University and AstraZeneca unveiled the results of the partnership's Phase 3 Covid-19 vaccine trials, a growing number of questions have emerged. The stated 70% average efficacy was significantly lower than the 94.5% to 95% reported by the other two leading candidates, Moderna and Pfizer. Yet this vaccine could still prove to be more valuable for the world than the other two in the coming months. If the questions over its results are answered and it receives approval, it may lead the way in providing vaccine coverage in poorer countries where it is urgently needed.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/28/health/oxford-astrazeneca-vaccines-developing-countries-intl/index.html>

### **Covid 19: Redcar rapid testing rolled out amid mass testing talks**

Rapid Covid tests will be introduced in an area previously dropped from the mass testing programme. Redcar Council has received 10,000 lateral flow tests, which are able to produce results in under half an hour. A pilot to offer tests to Redcar's 36,000 residents did not go ahead and now the authority is in talks over the cost of reintroducing it. Councillor Steve Kay said the 10,000 rapid

tests would help protect the "most vulnerable". All councils in the Tees Valley have been offered the opportunity for residents to take part in mass testing.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tees-55114623>

### **Covid-19: Mass testing a 'distraction' from vaccine rollout - health leaders**

Mass testing plans in England threaten to be a "distraction" from other priorities such as the rollout of a vaccine, health leaders have warned. The PM has said mass community testing, as seen in Liverpool, will be offered to all areas in tier three after lockdown ends. But experts have questioned whether this is possible due to the "enormous" resources it requires. The government said it will work with local authorities to support plans. In a joint statement, the Faculty of Public Health and the Association of Directors of Public Health said improving NHS Test and Trace must remain the top focus for testing.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-55108612>

### **Covid vaccine trials did NOT monitor whether participants took other steps to prevent infection like wearing masks and social distancing**

A participant in Pfizer's coronavirus vaccine trials told Business Insider that the firm did not monitor the participants behavior if they didn't feel sick. Moderna also did not specify how to behave or track data on the participants' actions during its trial. It was left up to individuals to wear masks or socially distance - behaviors that are estimated to reduce the risk of spreading or catching COVID-19.

[https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-8990763/Covid-vaccine-trials-did-not-monitor-participants-wore-masks-socially-distanced.html?ito=social-twitter\\_mailonline](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-8990763/Covid-vaccine-trials-did-not-monitor-participants-wore-masks-socially-distanced.html?ito=social-twitter_mailonline)

### **Europe coronavirus: Second wave began in Spain before spreading via tourists, study suggests**

Europe was hit hard by a coronavirus second wave that saw cases rise faster than on any other continent. Scientists have identified a new viral strain they believe is to blame for much of the wave, which first emerged among fruit pickers in northern Spain before being passed to tourists as borders reopened. Tourists took the new strain home, where it spread like wildfire among local communities as rules were relaxed. Strain now accounts for up to 70 per cent of cases in Switzerland, Ireland, and the UK, and is 'prevalent' in Norway, Latvia, the Netherlands, and France.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8991043/Europe-coronavirus-Second-wave-began-Spain-spreading-tourists-study-suggests.html>

### **Suspected North Korean hackers targeted COVID vaccine maker AstraZeneca - sources**

Suspected North Korean hackers have tried to break into the systems of British drugmaker AstraZeneca in recent weeks, two people with knowledge of the matter told Reuters, as the company races to deploy its vaccine for the COVID-19 virus. The hackers posed as recruiters on networking site LinkedIn and WhatsApp to approach AstraZeneca staff with fake job offers, the sources said. They then sent documents purporting to be job descriptions that were laced with malicious code designed to gain access to a victim's computer. The hacking attempts targeted a "broad set of people" including staff working on COVID-19 research, said one of the sources, but are not thought to have been successful.

[https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-healthcare-coronavirus-astrazeneca-no-idUKKBN2871A2?taid=5fc0f27d98701900016e3d58&utm\\_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm\\_medium=trueAnthem&utm\\_source=twitter](https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-healthcare-coronavirus-astrazeneca-no-idUKKBN2871A2?taid=5fc0f27d98701900016e3d58&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter)

### **Why Covid-19 patients with diabetes or heart disease are more likely to die**

Researchers studied the role of cholesterol in coronavirus infection. Found the presence of high cholesterol is linked to increased infection of cells. Believed the coronavirus binds to cholesterol and hijacks a lift to the cell surface. Once here it can then easily attach to ACE2, the receptor which allows the virus into human cells.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-8990115/Why-Covid-19-patients-diabetes-heart-disease-likely-die-cor>

[onavirus.html?ito=social-twitter\\_mailonline](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/27/more-than-1300-wrongly-told-they-have-covid-after-test-and-trace-lab-error)

### **More than 1,300 wrongly told they have Covid after Test and Trace lab error**

More than 1,300 people were wrongly told they had coronavirus due to a lab error with the government's Test and Trace service. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) said 1,311 people who took a test from 19-23 November across the UK were incorrectly told they received a positive result. It said there was an issue with a batch of testing chemicals which meant their results were void. A DHSC spokesman said: "Swift action is being taken to notify those affected and they are being asked to take another test, and to continue to self-isolate if they have symptoms. This laboratory error was an isolated incident and is being fully investigated to ensure this does not happen again." The DHSC did not comment on whether the error affected regional infection rate figures.

[https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/27/more-than-1300-wrongly-told-they-have-covid-after-test-and-trace-lab-error?utm\\_term=Autofeed&CMP=tw\\_t\\_gu&utm\\_medium=utm\\_source=Twitter#Echobox=1606513057](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/27/more-than-1300-wrongly-told-they-have-covid-after-test-and-trace-lab-error?utm_term=Autofeed&CMP=tw_t_gu&utm_medium=utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1606513057)

### **Chief Medical Officer dodges giving AstraZeneca jab his full backing as the company reveals it will run a NEW Oxford vaccine trial because NO ONE who got accidental low dose that had 90% success rate was aged over 55**

Chris Whitty refused to back the injection when asked about controversial data Vaccine scrutinised after it was found to be 70 per cent effective on average But it is but 90% effective with low-dose jab followed by standard booster jab This higher result, based on a sub-group of 2,700 people, was met with concern It came when it emerged that no one in the group was reportedly aged over 55

[https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8989783/Chris-Whitty-refuses-outright-Oxfords-Covid-19-vaccine.html?ito=social-twitter\\_dailymailUK](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8989783/Chris-Whitty-refuses-outright-Oxfords-Covid-19-vaccine.html?ito=social-twitter_dailymailUK)

### **Type O blood linked to lower COVID risk, taking Vitamin D unlikely to help**

The following is a roundup of some of the latest scientific studies on the novel coronavirus and efforts to find treatments and vaccines for COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-science-idUSKBN2872LH>

### **WHO warns countries with falling COVID cases to stay alert**

Even if countries see a fall in coronavirus cases, they need to stay vigilant, Maria Van Kerkhove, the World Health Organization's technical lead for COVID-19, said on Friday. "What we don't want to see is situations where you are moving from lockdown to bringing (the virus) under control to another lockdown," she told a virtual briefing in Geneva. Nearly 61 million people have been reported to be infected by the coronavirus globally and 1.4 million have died, according to a Reuters tally. "It is in our power to keep transmission low," she said. "We have seen dozens of countries show us that it can be brought under control and kept under control."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-who-vigilance/who-warns-countries-with-falling-covid-cases-to-stay-alert-idUSZ8N2G5020>

### **Does the AstraZeneca Vaccine Also Stop Covid Transmission?**

Vaccines can prevent symptoms, but some can also keep people from spreading infection. That's critical, and no one knows if the new vaccines do it.

<https://www.wired.com/story/does-the-astrazeneca-vaccine-also-stop-covid-transmission/>

## **Coronavirus Resurgence**

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### **Coronavirus deaths hit new daily record in Greece**

Greece reported 121 coronavirus-related deaths on Saturday, a daily record, with hospitals in the north of the country under pressure as intensive care beds fill up with COVID-19 patients. Health authorities reported 1,747 COVID-19 cases on Saturday, bringing the total since the first case was detected in February to 103,034. The death toll stands at 2,223.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-greece-casualties/coronavirus-deaths-hit-new-daily-record-in-greece-idUKKBN2880PE>

### **Fauci warns of ‘surge upon surge’ of COVID-19 in coming weeks**

Top US infectious disease expert Dr Anthony Fauci, a member of President Donald Trump’s coronavirus task force, has warned that residents should brace for a “surge upon a surge” of infections following the Thanksgiving holiday. Fauci, speaking shortly after the US holiday, which saw the highest rate of travel in the US since the first major outbreak, said on Sunday, “There almost certainly is going to be an uptick because of what has happened with the travel.”

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/29/fauci-warns-surge-upon-surge-of-covid-19-in-coming-weeks>

### **New Covid-19 cluster emerges in Hong Kong restaurants amid fourth wave**

Hong Kong authorities are warning of an even more severe fourth wave of coronavirus infections after identifying a new group of cases at three restaurants that may be linked to the ever-expanding “super-spreader” dance venue cluster. More than 10 servers, cleaners and patrons at the three restaurants – Stellar House in Wan Chai, 8½ Otto e Mezzo Bombana in Central, and Chuen Cheung Kui in Sheung Wan – have been confirmed sick, with authorities adding the venues to the mandatory testing list. The city recorded 115 new Covid-19 cases on Sunday, the highest daily increase since August 1, when it saw 125 new infections. Of those, 62 were linked to the dance venue cluster, bringing the city’s largest coronavirus outbreak so far to 479 cases.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/3111847/coronavirus-hong-kongs-fourth-wave-will-be-more>

### **India's Modi visits key vaccine facilities as COVID-19 case load surges**

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi toured three of the nation’s leading vaccine development and manufacturing sites on Saturday as coronavirus cases continue to soar. India has recorded 9.35 million COVID-19 infections, second only to the United States. It reported 41,322 new cases and 485 deaths on Saturday. The western state of Maharashtra – home to India’s financial hub, Mumbai – has been particularly hard hit by the virus. Its tally of 1.68 million cases is higher than countries such as Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-india-idUSKBN2880FY>

### **Swedes question Covid-19 approach as second wave hits**

Sweden’s centre-left government has long seemed happy to allow Anders Tegnell, the state epidemiologist, to be the public face of the country’s distinctive approach to handling the Covid-19 pandemic. But as the second wave has hit Sweden, which resisted a formal lockdown, much harder than its Nordic neighbours – contrary to predictions made by Mr Tegnell in the spring and summer – so the government in Stockholm has stirred into action. Stefan Lofven, the Swedish prime minister, announced two weeks ago what he called the most intrusive measures in “modern times” in banning public gatherings of more than eight people. That night, Mr Tegnell told Swedish radio that it was not his public health agency “putting our foot down”, and that the ban was less wide-ranging than the prime minister had suggested.

<https://www.ft.com/content/ef9b05a1-dd8e-49cd-b1b1-47151c93aa41>

### **Pressure on critical care facilities in covid-19 patients in India**

The covid-19 pandemic has presented multiple challenges to healthcare systems around the world. We want to highlight the difficulties in Kerala, India, of providing palliative care for patients with pre-existing advanced disease who are infected with coronavirus. There are difficult ethical issues related to triage and care rationing when resources are limited and demand is high, alongside the logistical challenge of making such decisions. The pandemic has now laid bare issues about futile and inappropriate medical interventions in certain contexts.

<https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2020/11/27/pressure-on-critical-care-facilities-in-covid-19-patients-in-india/>

### **COVID-19: UK's R number falls to lowest level since August as daily infections decline**

The UK's R number has fallen to between 0.9 and 1, according to new figures. Scientists have estimated the reproduction number, known as the R number, is now edging below one. It comes as the daily infection rate dropped slightly, with the UK recording a further 16,022 coronavirus cases and 521 related deaths. On Thursday 17,555 cases were recorded along with 498 deaths. The Government Office for Science said the impact of England's lockdown, which started on 5 November, is only beginning to be observed in the R number this week.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-uks-r-number-falls-to-between-0-9-and-1-12143893>

### **US is 'rounding the corner into a calamity,' expert says, with Covid-19 deaths projected to double soon**

As Thanksgiving week draws to an end, more experts are warning the Covid-19 pandemic will likely get much worse in the coming weeks before a possible vaccine begins to offer some relief. More than 205,000 new cases were reported Friday -- which likely consists of both Thursday and Friday reports in some cases, as at least 20 states did not report Covid-19 numbers on Thanksgiving. As of Saturday evening, more than 138,000 new cases and 1,100 deaths had been reported, according to Johns Hopkins University. And while there is more good news on the vaccine front, for now Americans need to "hunker down" and prepare for a difficult winter ahead, according to Dr. Leana Wen, an emergency medicine physician and a visiting professor at George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/28/health/us-coronavirus-saturday/index.html>

### **With no action by Washington, states race to offer virus aid**

Faulting inaction in Washington, governors and state lawmakers are racing to get pandemic relief to small-business owners, the unemployed, renters and others whose livelihoods have been upended by the widening coronavirus outbreak. In some cases, elected officials are spending the last of a federal relief package passed in the spring as an end-of-year deadline approaches and the fall COVID-19 surge threatens their economies anew. Underscoring the need for urgency, the number of new COVID-19 cases reported in the United States reached 205,557 on Friday, according to data from Johns Hopkins University – the first time its daily figure topped the 200,000 mark. Its previous daily high was 196,000 on Nov. 20.

<https://www.chron.com/news/article/With-no-action-by-Washington-states-race-to-15759731.php>

### **UK coronavirus death toll jumps by 479 as London lockdown protesters clash with police**

The UK has recorded 15,871 new coronavirus cases and a further 479 deaths overnight. Today's rise in infections follows a steady decrease in case rates across the country. The total number of infections recorded over the past week is 35,955 fewer than over the previous seven days – a fall of 24.1 per cent. It takes Britain's total Covid-19 infection count since the start of the pandemic to 1,605,172. However, the positive trend in cases comes amid an ongoing rise in weekly deaths.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/uk-coronavirus-death-toll-latest-cases-b91783.html>

### **Germany's coronavirus case toll tops 1million after 22,806 new infections were added to the total**

Germany logged 22,268 new cases of coronavirus on Friday, bringing its overall total from 983,588 to 1,006,394 as 426 deaths were also recorded - the highest one-day toll of the whole pandemic.

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/health/medical/germanys-coronavirus-case-toll-tops-1million/ar-BB1bp21s>

### **The seven local Irish areas with alarming Covid-19 rates despite lockdown with one as bad as Spain**

Seven local areas in Ireland still have Covid-19 incidence rates of over 240 per 100,000 people in the last two weeks despite lockdown. Four electorate areas in Donegal as well as one in Limerick, Louth and Offaly are the worst in the country according to the latest data up until midnight, November 23.

Milford in Donegal has the worst rate in the country at 355.8 which, according to the ECDC, is not far off the rate of Spain's which stands at 361.4 today. Letterkenny is the only other electorate area in Ireland that currently has a rate of over 300. Here's a look at the seven spots with rates of over 200 per 100,000 people.

<https://www.irishmirror.ie/news/irish-news/seven-local-irish-areas-alarming-23083658>

### **Asia Today: Speed of viral spread causes concern in S. Korea**

South Korea reported more than 500 new coronavirus cases for the third straight day on Saturday, the fastest spread of infections the country has seen since the early days of the pandemic. The 504 cases reported by the Korea Disease Control and Prevention brought the total number of infections since the pandemic began to 33,375, including 522 deaths. Around 330 of the new cases came from the Seoul metropolitan area, home to about half of the country's 51 million people, where health workers are struggling to stem transmissions linked to hospitals, schools, saunas, gyms and army units.

<https://apnews.com/article/seoul-south-korea-coronavirus-pandemic-asia-economy-4f5f3c52f355163ed9d861ff3b3d26a8>

### **England's hospitals could be overwhelmed without new tier system - minister**

England needs tough restrictions after its current lockdown ends if hospitals are not to become overwhelmed, a senior minister said, as Prime Minister Boris Johnson wrote to lawmakers to say the measures would end in February to try to quell opposition. Britain upped preparations for a vaccine roll-out on Saturday as Johnson named Nadhim Zahawi as a new health minister to oversee its deployment and the Financial Times reported that the UK is set to approve the BioNTech Pfizer vaccine next week. But despite progress on the vaccine, the government still needs to convince lawmakers to back its new tougher tiered measures which will put 99% of English people into the highest two levels of restrictions when the current national lockdown ends on Dec. 2.

<https://ca.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-idCAKBN28809I>

## **New Lockdown**

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### **South Korea agency says North Korea leader Kim Jong Un ordered executions, locked down capital**

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has ordered at least two people executed, banned fishing at sea and locked down the capital, Pyongyang, as part of frantic efforts to guard against the coronavirus and its economic damage, South Korea's spy agency told lawmakers Friday. Kim's government also ordered diplomats overseas to refrain from any acts that could provoke the United States because it is worried about President-elect Joe Biden's expected new approach toward North Korea, lawmakers told reporters after attending a private briefing by the National Intelligence Service. One of the lawmakers, Ha Tae-keung, quoted the NIS as saying Kim is displaying "excessive anger" and taking "irrational measures" over the pandemic and its economic impact.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2020/11/27/south-korea-says-north-korea-kim-jong-un-executions-covid/6435409002/>

### **Los Angeles County to impose new COVID-19 restrictions on social gatherings**

Nearly all social gatherings of individuals from more than a single household will be banned in Los Angeles County for at least three weeks starting Monday under new restrictions local health officials unveiled on Friday, citing a continued surge in COVID-19 infections. The public health order specifically exempts religious services and protests under constitutionally protected rights in an apparent nod to Wednesday's U.S. Supreme Court decision striking down a New York state order that had restricted the size of religious gatherings. The Los Angeles County measures, affecting some 20 million people living in and around the nation's second-largest city, go beyond a curfew imposed last week by California Governor Gavin Newsom barring social gatherings and other non-

essential activities across most of the state between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.

<https://japantoday.com/category/world/update-1-los-angeles-county-to-impose-new-covid-19-restrictions-on-social-gatherings>

### **Lockdown in Los Angeles: LA County asks its 10 million residents to stay home for THREE weeks - but churches and protests are exempt**

Los Angeles County confirmed 24 new deaths and 4,544 new cases on Friday. Officials banned most gatherings but stopped short of full shutdown on stores. Restrictions were brought on by average of 4,751 cases a day for last five days. Residents of nation's most populous county are being urged to stay home. People are also not allowed to gather with those from outside their household. Exceptions are being made for church services and protests, officials said. Non-essential retail businesses could stay open, but at 20 per cent capacity.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8995205/Los-Angeles-issues-stay-home-order-coronavirus-surges.html>

### **Panicking Kim Jong Un has had two people executed and locked down Pyongyang as he tries to tackle coronavirus and its economic damage, South Korea claims**

Kim Jong Un is taking 'irrational measures' against Covid-19, South Korea says. North Korea executed a high-profile money changer in Pyongyang last month. Key official was executed in August for bringing in goods from abroad, NIS says.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8992493/S-Korea-agency-says-N-Korea-executed-people-shut-Pyongyang.html>