

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

11th Oct 2021

One Minute Overview

Anxiety surged during pandemic, particularly among women - study - The COVID-19 pandemic led to a surge in anxiety and major depressive disorders across the world, particularly among women and young people, a study published in the Lancet on Friday found. [Young people suffered as school closures kept them away from friends, and many women found themselves bearing the brunt of household work and facing an increased risk of domestic violence, the researchers said.](#) The study, led by academics at the University of Queensland, Australia, recorded 76 million additional cases of anxiety disorders and 53 million of major depressive disorder as COVID-19 spread in 2020.

Latvia Declares Three-Month Covid State of Emergency - The Latvian government declared a three-month state of emergency after coronavirus infections hit a record and hospitalizations rose, the country's public broadcaster reported. [The state of emergency will start on Oct. 11, and will mandate vaccinations for public sector workers,](#) restrictions on retail and bars and push more people to work from home. Latvia recorded a record 1,752 new Covid cases on Thursday, with more than 700 in the hospital.

The Pandemic's Toll on Women's Careers - For all the change brought on by the pandemic, women in white-collar roles still made strides at nearly every level of U.S. companies last year, a comprehensive new study shows. [The proportion of women in the corporate workforce didn't decline significantly last year, and the number of women holding some senior roles increased,](#) according to data from the 2021 Women in the Workplace report by McKinsey & Co. and LeanIn.Org. But the report also found that women are experiencing higher rates of burnout than men, and are questioning whether they want to remain with their companies and on their existing career paths. Lareina Yee, a senior partner at McKinsey who previously served as the firm's chief diversity and inclusion officer, and Rachel Thomas, Lean In's co-founder and CEO, spoke separately with the Journal about some of the takeaways from this year's report. Here are edited excerpts of the conversations.

Italy widens COVID-19 vaccine booster campaign to frail and over 60s - Italy has decided to provide a booster shot of Pfizer and BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine to frail people regardless of their age as well as people aged 60 and over, the health ministry said on Friday. [The booster dose would be available on condition that at least six months have passed since people completed their primary vaccination cycle, the ministry said in a statement.](#) The European Union's drugs regulator said on Monday people with weakened immune systems should get a third dose of a COVID-19 vaccine from Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna but left it to member states to decide if the wider population should have a booster

Boosters, employer mandates drive increase in US vaccines - [The number of Americans getting COVID-19 vaccines has steadily increased to a three-month high as seniors and people with medical conditions seek boosters,](#) and government and employer mandates push more workers to take their first doses.

Coronavirus: as Australia plans border reopening, stranded citizens wait with anxiety, trepidation - But with promises of being able to return home for Christmas 2020 still ringing in their ears, many stranded Australians dare not hope the ordeal is over, [Prime Minister Scott Morrison has pledged to ease strict controls on overseas citizens returning home within weeks and to cut quarantine](#) for those who have been vaccinated to seven days at home - rather than 14 at a hotel

Bangkok's reopening to be postponed - Bangkok's reopening for inoculated tourists will be delayed by two weeks as most of the city's residents are still waiting for their second jabs, while the tourism ministry has pledged to open the city to bring at least 1 million international tourists this year. Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn, [the tourism and sports minister, said the appropriate timeline for Bangkok should be postponed from Oct 1 to Oct 15 as the capital city is expected to have administered Covid-19 vaccines to 70% of its residents by then.](#) At present, 37% of population is fully vaccinated, while another 33% are in the 8-12 week interval following their first AstraZeneca shot.

Russians flock to Serbia for Western-made COVID-19 vaccines - When Russian regulators approved the country's own coronavirus vaccine, it was a moment of national pride, and the Pavlov family was among those who rushed to take the injection. [But international health authorities have not yet given their blessing to the Sputnik V shot.](#) So when the family from Rostov-on-Don wanted to visit the West, they looked for a vaccine that would allow them to travel freely — a quest that brought them to Serbia, where hundreds of Russian citizens have flocked in recent weeks to receive Western-approved COVID-19 shots.

Nearly 2 million over-50s have yet to first Covid vaccine, despite booster drive kicking off already - As many as 2million people over the age of 50 in England still haven't had a single Covid vaccine, official figures suggest. [MailOnline's analysis of NHS vaccination data means about one in 10 of those who were prioritised in the jab rollout still haven't come forward.](#) Up to 127,288 over-80s remain unvaccinated, despite the programme opening to them as the very first age group last December. Age is the one of the biggest single risk factors for Covid. Yet, the analysis shows there are as many as 249,727 un-jabbed people in their 70s in England.

More organ transplant centers require patients to get Covid-19 vaccine or bumped down waitlist - A Colorado kidney transplant candidate who was bumped to inactive status for failing to get a covid-19 vaccine has become the most public example of an argument roiling the nation's more than 250 organ transplant centers. [Across the country, growing numbers of transplant programs have chosen to either bar patients who refuse to take the widely available covid vaccines from receiving transplants,](#) or give them lower priority on crowded organ waitlists. Other programs, however, say they plan no such restrictions — for now.

Indonesian volunteers help to bury COVID victims - The COVID-19 situation in Indonesia has improved, but the pandemic is still claiming victims. [And where there are victims, there are funerals. Here's where tireless volunteers have stepped up to provide much-needed help.](#)

7% of Israel's serious COVID cases had three vaccine shots - Some 7% of Israel's serious and critical COVID-19 cases were vaccinated with three shots of the coronavirus vaccine, according to data released Friday morning by the Health Ministry. However, the number of new daily cases is declining and the government voted to roll out the Green Class outline in several green cities on Sunday to help keep children out of isolation. ["I cannot say that 7% is a lot," Health Minister Director-General Prof. Nachman Ash told The Jerusalem Post.](#) "The vaccine, even the third shot, does not work at 100%. It is 95% effective."

Merck drug less effective against moderate COVID -India regulatory source - Merck & Co's experimental antiviral drug molnupiravir has not shown 'significant efficacy' against moderate COVID-19, a source with the Drug Controller General of India said. [Aurobindo Pharma Ltd wants to discontinue a late-stage trial of molnupiravir in moderate COVID-19 patients, the regulator's expert committee said on Friday.](#) 'There is no significant efficacy against moderate COVID and the effective efficacy is towards mild cases,' the source said on condition of anonymity due to the sensitive nature of the discussions.

Covid Hospitalizations Rise in Colorado Even With High Vaccination Rate - Covid-19

hospitalizations are rising again in Colorado even with more than 70% of those eligible in the state vaccinated, health officials said Friday. [The recent daily average has been around 900 hospitalizations, one of the highest readings since the pandemic started in March 2020, according to data from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.](#) Two weeks ago, the average was running around 875. An estimated 40% of intensive care unit patients in Colorado are infected with Covid-19, and ICU capacity is running at roughly 86%, data show. The delta variant and its relatives account for “100%” of known cases in the state, demonstrating delta’s staying power, Rachel Herlihy, state epidemiologist, said during an online news briefing.

‘Crisis unfolding’ as Papua New Guinea hospitals hit by worst Covid wave yet - Hospitals in

Papua New Guinea are being pushed to the brink and morgues are overflowing, as the country suffers what health authorities say is the worst surge in Covid-19 cases since the pandemic began.

[The country’s health care system has long been plagued by shortages of drugs, funding, an ailing infrastructure and a severe lack of health workers.](#) Now, major hospitals around Papua New Guinea have been forced to scale down vital medical services while at least one says it may be forced to close altogether.

COVID-19: Calls for stronger safety measures in schools amid pupil infection surge -

Education unions have called for the reintroduction of extra safety measures in schools after official estimates showed around 270,000 secondary pupils had COVID-19 last week. [The demand for action came as an expert warned about the level of coronavirus circulating among older children.](#) The latest figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show that around one in 15 children in school years 7 to 11 in England are estimated to have had COVID-19 in the week to 2 October. This was the highest positivity rate for any age group and up from one in 20 during the previous seven-day period.

Lockdown Exit

As International Travel Returns, Confusion Over Coronavirus Vaccines Reigns

When Turkey was taken off Britain’s red list for travel last month, Sally Morrow, an English expatriate living in the Turkish capital of Ankara, rushed to her computer and booked flights to London, so that she could reunite with her ailing parents after more than six months apart. But soon after her ticket confirmation came through, Ms. Morrow, 47, read that the certificate she received when she was vaccinated in Turkey — with the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus vaccine — would not be accepted in Britain. As a result, Ms. Morrow would be required to quarantine for 10 days and take at least three negative coronavirus tests before being permitted to leave isolation there. “I had the Pfizer jab, the Rolls-Royce of vaccines, the exact same one as millions of Brits, yet I’m considered unvaccinated simply because I got my vaccine abroad,” Ms. Morrow said.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/travel/travel-vaccine.html>

COVID-19 Special: Bolsonaro's Pandemic Failure

Brazilian President Bolsonaro called it “a little flu”. Now his country has the highest coronavirus death toll after the United States. Infection and death rates are slowly easing but that’s little consolation for the bereaved.

<https://www.dw.com/en/covid-19-special-bolsonaros-pandemic-failure/av-59451511>

The coronavirus pandemic is far from over

The goal for all countries is to make it to the blue section of the chart and stay there. Countries and territories in this section have reported no new cases for four weeks in a row. Currently, that is the case for five out of 188 countries and territories. How has the COVID-19 trend evolved over the past weeks? The situation has deteriorated slightly: 65 countries have reported more cases in the past

two weeks compared with the previous 14 days. What is the current COVID-19 trend in my country? Based on the newly reported case numbers — which can reflect local outbreaks as well as the countrywide spread — in the past 28 days, countries and territories classify as follows:

<https://www.dw.com/en/coronavirus-global-pandemic-trend/a-53954594>

New FDA chief can't come soon enough for beleaguered agency

Straining under a pandemic workload and battered by a string of public controversies, one of the leading agencies in the government's fight against COVID-19 is finally on the verge of getting a new commissioner. After nearly nine months of searching, President Joe Biden says he's close to naming his choice to lead the Food and Drug Administration, which oversees vaccines, drugs and tests. Former FDA officials and other experts say the decision cannot come soon enough for the agency's beleaguered regulators. Thousands of FDA staffers are exhausted after racing for more than a year and a half to review products to battle the coronavirus, and the agency's reputation for rigorous, science-based regulation has been threatened by contentious disputes over COVID-19 booster shots and an unproven new Alzheimer's drug.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-joe-biden-science-business-health-62291dd94de2ec922bd9a76cbf389d66>

The Pandemic's Toll on Women's Careers

For all the change brought on by the pandemic, women in white-collar roles still made strides at nearly every level of U.S. companies last year, a comprehensive new study shows. The proportion of women in the corporate workforce didn't decline significantly last year, and the number of women holding some senior roles increased, according to data from the 2021 Women in the Workplace report by McKinsey & Co. and LeanIn.Org. But the report also found that women are experiencing higher rates of burnout than men, and are questioning whether they want to remain with their companies and on their existing career paths. Lareina Yee, a senior partner at McKinsey who previously served as the firm's chief diversity and inclusion officer, and Rachel Thomas, Lean In's co-founder and CEO, spoke separately with the Journal about some of the takeaways from this year's report. Here are edited excerpts of the conversations.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/womens-careers-pandemic-toll-11632520837>

Latvia Declares Three-Month Covid State of Emergency

The Latvian government declared a three-month state of emergency after coronavirus infections hit a record and hospitalizations rose, the country's public broadcaster reported. The state of emergency will start on Oct. 11, and will mandate vaccinations for public sector workers, restrictions on retail and bars and push more people to work from home. Latvia recorded a record 1,752 new Covid cases on Thursday, with more than 700 in the hospital.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-08/latvia-declares-three-month-covid-state-of-emergency-ism>

U.S. will accept WHO-approved COVID-19 vaccines for international visitors

The United States will accept the use by international visitors of COVID-19 vaccines authorized by U.S. regulators or the World Health Organization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said late on Friday. On Sept. 20, the White House announced the United States in November would lift travel restrictions on air travelers from 33 countries including China, India, Brazil and most of Europe who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. It did not specify then which vaccines would be accepted. A CDC spokeswoman told Reuters Friday, "Six vaccines that are FDA authorized/approved or listed for emergency use by WHO will meet the criteria for travel to the U.S."

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-will-accept-who-approved-covid-19-vaccines-international-visitors-2021-10-08/>

Anxiety surged during pandemic, particularly among women - study

The COVID-19 pandemic led to a surge in anxiety and major depressive disorders across the world, particularly among women and young people, a study published in the Lancet on Friday found.

Young people suffered as school closures kept them away from friends, and many women found themselves bearing the brunt of household work and facing an increased risk of domestic violence, the researchers said. The study, led by academics at the University of Queensland, Australia, recorded 76 million additional cases of anxiety disorders and 53 million of major depressive disorder as COVID-19 spread in 2020.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/anxiety-surged-during-pandemic-particularly-among-women-study-2021-10-08/>

Exit Strategies

Italy widens COVID-19 vaccine booster campaign to frail and over 60s

Italy has decided to provide a booster shot of Pfizer and BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine to frail people regardless of their age as well as people aged 60 and over, the health ministry said on Friday. The booster dose would be available on condition that at least six months have passed since people completed their primary vaccination cycle, the ministry said in a statement. The European Union's drugs regulator said on Monday people with weakened immune systems should get a third dose of a COVID-19 vaccine from Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna but left it to member states to decide if the wider population should have a booster

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/italy-widens-covid-19-vaccine-booster-campaign-frail-over-60s-2021-10-08/>

Wasted COVID vaccine doses in Louisiana swell to 224,000

Louisiana's problem of wasted COVID-19 vaccine shots continues to balloon, with about 224,000 doses thrown out across the state as health providers can't find enough residents willing to roll up their sleeves. The number of trashed doses has nearly tripled since the end of July, even as Louisiana grappled with a fourth, deadly surge of the coronavirus pandemic during that time that led to increased interest in the vaccines. The latest data provided to The Associated Press by the Louisiana Department of Health showed 223,918 doses of the two-shot Pfizer and Moderna vaccines and the one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine have been thrown out.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-louisiana-united-states-immunizations-coronavirus-vaccine-da4de8571cda90a94bab2abd5f8ac402>

Brazil has lined up 350 million COVID-19 vaccine doses for 2022, Health Minister says

Brazil's Health Minister Marcelo Queiroga said on Friday the country has already acquired, or is in advanced talks to secure, around 350 million vaccine doses for 2022. Queiroga said that although Sinovac's Coronavac vaccine was not currently part of plans for the national campaign next year, it could be incorporated if it receives full approval from Brazil's health regulator.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/brazil-has-lined-up-350-million-covid-19-vaccine-doses-2022-health-minister-says-2021-10-08/>

Singapore expands quarantine-free travel, eyes COVID-19 'new normal'

Singapore is opening its borders to more countries for quarantine-free travel as the city-state seeks to rebuild its status as an international aviation hub, and prepares to reach a "new normal" to live with COVID-19. From Oct. 19 fully vaccinated people from eight countries, including Britain, France, Spain and the United States, will be able to enter the island without quarantining if they pass their COVID-19 tests, the government said on Saturday. The announcement marks a major step in Singapore's strategy to resume international links.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/singapore-pm-says-covid-19-new-normal-could-take-up-6-months-2021-10-09/>

Russians flock to Serbia for Western-made COVID-19 vaccines

When Russian regulators approved the country's own coronavirus vaccine, it was a moment of national pride, and the Pavlov family was among those who rushed to take the injection. But

international health authorities have not yet given their blessing to the Sputnik V shot. So when the family from Rostov-on-Don wanted to visit the West, they looked for a vaccine that would allow them to travel freely — a quest that brought them to Serbia, where hundreds of Russian citizens have flocked in recent weeks to receive Western-approved COVID-19 shots.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/serbia-world-health-organization-covid-belgrade-pfizer-b1935295.html>

Canadian province of Ontario to further ease pandemic restrictions

Ontario is lifting capacity limits on concert venues, theaters and spectator facilities at sports games as of Saturday at midnight, the government of Canada's most populous province said on Friday, while continuing to require proof of vaccination and masks. Limited numbers of outbreaks in those settings have been reported, a statement from the provincial government said. Meeting and event spaces as well as horse racing facilities will be included, although indoor meeting and event spaces must be able to maintain physical distancing between people.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/canadian-province-ontario-further-ease-pandemic-restrictions-2021-10-08/>

Australia braces for more COVID-19 infections as country moves towards re-opening

Australia was bracing for more COVID-19 infections and hospitalisations, officials said on Saturday, even as it moves toward gradually easing pandemic restrictions with the vast majority of its people getting vaccinated against the virus. Sydney, in a lockdown for more than 100 days, is to ease some key restrictions for the fully vaccinated from Monday. More than 70% of people across New South Wales state, of which Sydney is the capital, have been fully vaccinated. "We know that as we open up, case numbers will increase," said New South Wales Premier Dominic Perrottet. "But what has been key to keeping people safe is our high vaccination rate."

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/australia-braces-more-covid-19-infections-country-moves-towards-re-opening-2021-10-09/>

As Sydney readies to exit lockdown, doctors fret re-opening is moving too fast

Australian doctors warned a too-rapid easing of COVID-19 curbs in Sydney could put pressure on health systems and risk lives, as the city prepares for key restrictions to be relaxed next week after more than 100 days in lockdown. Stay-at-home orders are due to be lifted on Monday after New South Wales state this week hit its 70% target of full vaccination for its adult population, and owners of restaurants and other public venues are now scrambling to arrange supplies and staffing. While an easing of restrictions on travel for Sydneysiders outside of their local government areas had previously been flagged, authorities on Thursday also decided to bump up permitted limits for home gatherings, weddings and funerals - earning the ire of the Australian Medical Association (AMA).

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/sydney-readies-exit-lockdown-amid-concerns-over-faster-reopening-plans-2021-10-07/>

India set to reopen for foreign travellers from 15 October

India will reopen to tourism from October 15, the government said, after more than a year of closure due to the coronavirus pandemic. Foreign nationals will be able to apply for a visa for the first time since March 2020, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government imposed a strict lockdown in response to the pandemic. "After considering various inputs, the MHA (home ministry) has decided to begin granting fresh Tourist Visas for foreigners coming to India through chartered flights with effect from 15 October, 2021," the home ministry said in a statement on 7 October. It added that foreigners traveling to India via commercial flights will be able to enter on fresh tourist visas starting November 15, 2021. The home ministry has said all COVID-19 protocols "should be adhered to

<https://www.traveldailymedia.com/news-alert-india-set-to-reopen-for-foreign-travellers-from-15-october/>

NSW hits 'impressive' vaccination target as 580 new Covid cases recorded

Almost 90 per cent of eligible NSW residents have received at least one dose of the Covid-19

vaccine. The state is expected to reach the milestone within the next two days. Premier Dominic Perrottet applauded NSW residents coming forward for their jabs. However, he said some Sydney postcodes were languishing at less than 50 per cent double-dose rates. "Vaccination is incredibly important. We know it keeps people safe, particularly those in vulnerable communities," Mr Perrottet said. "To be in a position as we come close to a 90 per cent first-dose vaccination rate is impressive."

<https://www.perthnow.com.au/news/nsw-hits-impressive-vaccination-target-as-580-new-covid-cases-recorded-c-4189672>

Pfizer shots offered to Novavax trial volunteers so they can travel

Britain announced that it will offer new vaccinations to thousands of people who volunteered for trials of the Novavax coronavirus vaccine, which hasn't yet been approved for use in any country. About 15,000 people in Britain got Novavax shots as part of a clinical trial. While Britain recognises them as vaccinated, most countries don't, meaning they can't travel. Britain's health department said on Friday that more than 15,000 participants would be given two doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine. The government says it plans to expand the offer to about 6000 British participants in trials of other vaccines that also haven't been approved for use. Britain has appealed to other members of the Group of 20 nations to classify clinical trial volunteers as vaccinated, but most haven't done so.

<https://www.smh.com.au/world/europe/pfizer-shots-offered-to-novavax-trial-volunteers-so-they-can-travel-20211009-p58y1s.html>

Bangkok's reopening to be postponed

Bangkok's reopening for inoculated tourists will be delayed by two weeks as most of the city's residents are still waiting for their second jabs, while the tourism ministry has pledged to open the city to bring at least 1 million international tourists this year. Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn, the tourism and sports minister, said the appropriate timeline for Bangkok should be postponed from Oct 1 to Oct 15 as the capital city is expected to have administered Covid-19 vaccines to 70% of its residents by then. At present, 37% of population is fully vaccinated, while another 33% are in the 8-12 week interval following their first AstraZeneca shot.

<https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/2182455/bangkoks-reopening-to-be-postponed>

Govt slams 'Pfizer jab is a killer' claim

The government has condemned a claim that the Pfizer mRNA Covid-19 vaccine, being offered to students aged 12-17 as part of the plan to reopen schools in November, will have fatal consequences for all recipients within two years. In a message spread via the Line app by several teenage groups campaigning against the Pfizer vaccination programme for young people, it was claimed the vaccine was a tool for committing genocide against young people as they would eventually die within two years if injected with the vaccine, said Dr Chawetsan Namwat, director of the Emergency Health Hazard and Disease Control Division. This claim is believed to have fuelled fears among the parents of many students who appear reluctant to give their consent to have their children vaccinated, he said.

<https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2194923/govt-slams-pfizer-jab-is-a-killer-claim>

San Francisco to welcome cruise ships after 19-month hiatus

Cruise ships are returning to San Francisco after a 19-month hiatus brought on by the pandemic in what's sure to be a boost to the city's economy, the mayor announced Friday. The Majestic Princess will sail into the port of San Francisco Monday, the first cruise ship to dock in the San Francisco Bay Area since March 2020 when the Grand Princess captured the world's attention and made the coronavirus real to millions in the United States. The ship was carrying people infected with the coronavirus, and thousands of passengers aboard were quarantined as the ship idled off the California coast. The port of San Francisco, home to the Bay Area's only passenger cruise terminal,

expects to welcome 21 cruise ships through the remainder of the year.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-business-united-states-california-san-francisco-620a4625e8fcf273b5a4773b9019928a>

Nearly 2million over-50s have yet to first Covid vaccine, despite booster drive kicking off already

As many as 2million people over the age of 50 in England still haven't had a single Covid vaccine, official figures suggest. MailOnline's analysis of NHS vaccination data means about one in 10 of those who were prioritised in the jab rollout still haven't come forward. Up to 127,288 over-80s remain unvaccinated, despite the programme opening to them as the very first age group last December. Age is the one of the biggest single risk factors for Covid. Yet, the analysis shows there are as many as 249,727 un-jabbed people in their 70s in England.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10072099/Nearly-2million-50s-Covid-vaccine-despite-booster-drive-kicking-already.html>

Boosters, employer mandates drive increase in US vaccines

The number of Americans getting COVID-19 vaccines has steadily increased to a three-month high as seniors and people with medical conditions seek boosters, and government and employer mandates push more workers to take their first doses.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/boosters-employer-mandates-drive-increase-in-us-vaccines/ar-AAPhPKh>

Japan's new PM promises to do his utmost to end COVID-19 crisis

In his first policy speech, Japan's new Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has pledged to do his utmost to lead the country out of the COVID-19 crisis, while protecting its territory and people in an increasingly tough security environment. Kishida took the top job in the world's third-largest economy on Monday, replacing Yoshihide Suga, who had seen his support undermined by surging COVID-19 infections. Daily cases have recently fallen and a long state of emergency was lifted this month. "I'm determined to devote body-and-soul to overcome this national crisis with the people, carve out a new era and pass on to the next generation a country whose citizens are rich at heart," Kishida said in the speech to the lower house of parliament on Friday.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/japan-e2-80-99s-new-pm-promises-to-do-his-utmost-to-end-covid-19-crisis/ar-AAPgzL5>

Give Asian youth a voice to decide their post-pandemic future

Like many of her generation, Pauline Mandrilla, a 23-year-old civil engineer from Manila, suddenly found herself jobless when the Covid-19 pandemic hit. Mandrilla felt like a statistic, as she joined the ranks of some 22 per cent of unemployed Philippine youth affected by the pandemic's economic fallout. "During the onset of the pandemic, we were placed in a no-work, no-pay situation," Mandrilla recalled. "My previous job heavily relied on my being physically present on a construction site, but because of the quarantine restrictions, which halted public transportation in my region, I couldn't go to work."

<https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3151527/asian-youth-hard-hit-covid-19-pandemic-should-have-voice-decide>

Coronavirus: as Australia plans border reopening, stranded citizens wait with anxiety, trepidation

Prime Minister Scott Morrison has pledged to ease strict controls on overseas citizens returning home within weeks and to cut quarantine for those who have been vaccinated to seven days at home - rather than 14 at a hotel. But with promises of being able to return home for Christmas 2020 still ringing in their ears, many stranded Australians dare not hope the ordeal is over,

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/health-environment/article/3151525/coronavirus-australia-plans-border-reopening-stranded>

US will accept WHO-approved Covid-19 vaccines for international visitors

The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said six vaccines approved by the FDA or listed by the world health body for emergency use will meet the criteria The US is preparing to lift restrictions on fully vaccinated air travellers from 33 countries including China, India, Brazil and most of Europe in November

<https://www.scmp.com/news/world/united-states-canada/article/3151746/us-will-accept-who-approved-coronavirus-vaccines>

Partisan Exits

Coronavirus Northern Ireland: Robin Swann issues fresh plea against 'vaccine lies' as four further deaths recorded

A further four deaths linked to Covid and a further 1,274 positive cases in Northern Ireland, the Department of Health has recorded. The department's figures, published on Saturday, now means the death toll stands at 2,585. To date, 2,548,548 vaccines have been administered here. The statistics come as Health Minister Robin Swann warned that those spreading "misinformation and lies" about Covid vaccines are putting lives at risk. Speaking at the Ulster Unionist Party conference in Belfast, its first gathering since 2018, Mr Swann praised the health service response to the Covid pandemic but also criticised those sceptical about vaccines.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/coronavirus-northern-ireland-robin-swann-issues-fresh-plea-against-vaccine-lies-as-four-further-deaths-recorded-40932656.html>

NBA stars speak out against coronavirus vaccine mandate

Brooklyn Nets say Kyrie Irving is ineligible to play in a home preseason game, and people speculate it may be over his COVID vaccination status; Outkick founder Clay Travis provides insight on 'Fox & Friends Weekend.'

<https://news.yahoo.com/nba-stars-speak-against-coronavirus-132601202.html>

Indonesian volunteers help to bury COVID victims

The COVID-19 situation in Indonesia has improved, but the pandemic is still claiming victims. And where there are victims, there are funerals. Here's where tireless volunteers have stepped up to provide much-needed help.

<https://www.dw.com/en/indonesian-volunteers-help-to-bury-covid-victims/av-59441874>

The callous cretins who kill during a pandemic

Jason Hargrove should be alive. For years, the 50-year-old married father of six children drove a city bus in Detroit, Michigan to make an "honest living." Every weekday, he went to work to provide for his family. The local union president called Hargrove a "professional" who was dedicated to his job. Driving a bus can be risky. But, I suspect, Hargrove did not think that contracting a lethal virus was among the hazards. That was until late March 2020, when COVID-19 began to infect the United States and much of the world with the swiftness of a jet stream. It prompted Hargrove to record a brief video and post it on his Facebook account. For several minutes, Hargrove vented his anger, frustration and dread about the invisible threat boarding his bus. One news story described his short, urgent soliloquy as "profanity-laced". So, what? He had every right and reason to use blunt words to call out the dunces who put him in danger - on and off a bus.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/10/8/the-callous-cretins-who-kill>

Anti-vaccine chiropractors rising force of misinformation

The flashy postcard, covered with images of syringes, beckoned people to attend Vax-Con '21 to learn "the uncensored truth" about COVID-19 vaccines. Participants traveled from around the country to a Wisconsin Dells resort for a sold-out convention that was, in fact, a sea of misinformation and conspiracy theories about vaccines and the pandemic. The featured speaker was

the anti-vaccine activist who appeared in the 2020 movie “Plandemic,” which pushed false COVID-19 stories into the mainstream. One session after another discussed bogus claims about the health dangers of mask wearing and vaccines. The convention was organized by members of a profession that has become a major purveyor of vaccine misinformation during the pandemic: chiropractors.

<https://apnews.com/article/anti-virus-chiropractors-rising-force-misinformation-02b347767b45cab1d6d532be03c57529>

More organ transplant centers require patients to get Covid-19 vaccine or bumped down waitlist

A Colorado kidney transplant candidate who was bumped to inactive status for failing to get a covid-19 vaccine has become the most public example of an argument roiling the nation's more than 250 organ transplant centers. Across the country, growing numbers of transplant programs have chosen to either bar patients who refuse to take the widely available covid vaccines from receiving transplants, or give them lower priority on crowded organ waitlists. Other programs, however, say they plan no such restrictions — for now.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/08/health/organ-transplant-vaccine-khn-partner/index.html>

U.S. Pushes Back Against Military Vaccine Mandate Lawsuit

A Justice Department lawyer pushed back on military personnel claims that kicking them out of the service for refusing to get vaccinated will result in harm that can never be compensated by a court. The service members sued this week to vacate a Pentagon vaccine mandate for all those in the military, arguing they face imminent harm if a court order isn't issued temporarily blocking the requirement. They say they face dishonorable discharge or even two years in jail. “There is case law out there that says separation from the military is not irreparable harm,” Justice Department lawyer Andrew Carmichael said during a phone hearing Friday. He also said the U.S. should be given time to verify the claims by the anonymous service members.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-08/u-s-pushes-back-against-military-vaccine-mandate-lawsuit>

Snow Leopard Dies at U.S. Zoo After Exhibiting Signs of Covid-19

A snow leopard died after displaying symptoms similar to Covid-19 at a U.S. zoo housing a confirmed case of the virus, officials announced Friday. Baya, age 2 1/2, exhibited signs of a cough followed by “inappetence and lethargy” and died Thursday, according to the Great Plains Zoo in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. A necropsy is planned. One of the zoo's Amur tigers tested positive for the virus that causes Covid-19 this week, the zoo said. Other big cats have exhibited symptoms.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/finance/news/snow-leopard-dies-at-us-zoo-after-exhibiting-signs-of-covid-19/ar-AApI5zr>

Scientific Viewpoint

7% of Israel's serious COVID cases had three vaccine shots

Some 7% of Israel's serious and critical COVID-19 cases were vaccinated with three shots of the coronavirus vaccine, according to data released Friday morning by the Health Ministry. However, the number of new daily cases is declining and the government voted to roll out the Green Class outline in several green cities on Sunday to help keep children out of isolation. “I cannot say that 7% is a lot,” Health Minister Director-General Prof. Nachman Ash told The Jerusalem Post. “The vaccine, even the third shot, does not work at 100%. It is 95% effective.”

<https://www.jpost.com/health-and-wellness/coronavirus/7-percent-of-israels-serious-covid-cases-had-three-vaccine-shots-681455>

Moderna, Racing for Profits, Keeps Covid Vaccine Out of Reach of Poor

Moderna, whose coronavirus vaccine appears to be the world's best defense against Covid-19, has been supplying its shots almost exclusively to wealthy nations, keeping poorer countries waiting and

earning billions in profit. After developing a breakthrough vaccine with the financial and scientific support of the U.S. government, Moderna has shipped a greater share of its doses to wealthy countries than any other vaccine manufacturer, according to Airfinity, a data firm that tracks vaccine shipments. About one million doses of Moderna's vaccine have gone to countries that the World Bank classifies as low income. By contrast, 8.4 million Pfizer doses and about 25 million single-shot Johnson & Johnson doses have gone to those countries.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/09/business/moderna-covid-vaccine.html>

Novel vaccine strategy protects mice from COVID-19 and 4 related coronaviruses

The three marketed COVID-19 shots have validated the effectiveness of two vaccination technologies, mRNA and viral vector delivery. But the vaccines—from Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson—only protect against SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that sparked the pandemic. So a team of researchers in Japan set out to develop a universal coronavirus vaccine in the hopes of preventing future pandemics. Scientists at Osaka University engineered antibodies that prevented SARS-CoV-2 from infecting healthy cells in mice, they reported in the Journal of Experimental Medicine. They were also effective against SARS-CoV-1, which caused a small outbreak in the early 2000s, and three coronaviruses found in pangolins and bats, they said. The experimental vaccination approach exploits the biology of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, which shuttles the virus into human cells by binding to a cell surface receptor called ACE2. The spike protein's receptor-binding domain has a "head" region that facilitates that binding as well as a "core" region. While the head of each type of coronavirus is distinctive, the core regions are virtually identical.

<https://www.fiercebiotech.com/research/novel-vaccine-strategy-protects-mice-from-covid-19-and-4-related-coronaviruses>

Pregnant women with symptomatic COVID-19 have an increased risk of emergency deliveries

Pregnant women who contract symptomatic cases of COVID-19 are much more likely to suffer emergency complications or have babies who need intensive care, a new study suggests. Researchers from the University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, Texas, looked at more than 100 mothers-to-be who were diagnosed with the virus. More than half of pregnant women who developed symptoms had emergency deliveries compared to about four in 10 women without symptoms. Additionally, babies born to symptomatic mothers were more likely to need respiratory support or be admitted to neonatal intensive care units (NICUs).

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/health/familyhealth/pregnant-women-with-symptomatic-covid-at-greater-risk-of-complications/ar-AAPjBab>

With more Covid-19 booster shots on the horizon, one expert says mixing and matching doses may be an effective approach

Amid the growing prospect of more Covid-19 booster shots becoming available, an expert has suggested that some people could receive a dose of a different vaccine from the one they initially received. "I hope that when the FDA and CDC review data around Moderna and Johnson & Johnson that they will allow a mix-and-match approach," CNN medical analyst Dr. Leana Wen said Friday. Vaccine advisers for the US Food and Drug Administration will meet October 14 and 15 to discuss applications for booster doses from Moderna and J&J's vaccine arm Janssen. And on October 20 and 21, vaccine experts with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are slated to discuss the same course of action.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/09/health/us-coronavirus-saturday/index.html>

Merck drug less effective against moderate COVID -India regulatory source

Merck & Co's experimental antiviral drug molnupiravir has not shown "significant efficacy" against moderate COVID-19, a source with the Drug Controller General of India said. Aurobindo Pharma Ltd

wants to discontinue a late-stage trial of molnupiravir in moderate COVID-19 patients, the regulator's expert committee said on Friday. "There is no significant efficacy against moderate COVID and the effective efficacy is towards mild cases," the source said on condition of anonymity due to the sensitive nature of the discussions.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/merck-drug-less-effective-against-moderate-covid-india-regulatory-source-2021-10-08/>

Iceland Joins Nordic Peers in Halting Moderna Covid Vaccinations

Iceland is joining its Nordic peers in halting inoculations with Moderna Inc.'s Spikevax shot on concern over side effects. The Moderna jab, which has mostly been used in Iceland for second doses, won't be used until more information over its safety has been collected, the chief epidemiologist said on Friday. Sweden, Denmark and Finland have this week suspended the jabs for younger people because of the risk of heart inflammation as a potential side effect. Norway said men under 30 should consider choosing the Pfizer Inc.'s and BioNTech SE's rival vaccine, and the other Nordic nations also recommended that as an alternative. Both vaccinations use messenger RNA technology to prompt an immune reaction.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-08/iceland-joins-nordic-peers-in-halting-moderna-covid-vaccinations>

Two Indian drugmakers to end trials of generic Merck pill for moderate COVID-19

Two Indian drugmakers have requested permission to end late-stage trials of their generic versions of Merck & Co's promising experimental oral antiviral drug molnupiravir to treat moderate COVID-19, a week after Merck said its own trial had succeeded for mild-to-moderate patients. Merck earlier this year suspended its own development of molnupiravir as a treatment for hospitalized COVID-19 patients since many of them have reached a phase of the disease that is too late for an antiviral drug to provide much help.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/aurobindo-pharma-stop-molnupiravir-trial-moderate-covid-19-patients-2021-10-08/>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Covid-19 Australia: NSW records 580 new cases as state hits 90 per cent first jab milestone

New South Wales has recorded 580 new Covid-19 cases overnight. State poised to hit 90 per cent single dose vaccination as soon as Saturday. Dr Kerry Chant revealed source of new variant of Delta strain came from traveller

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10074319/Covid-19-Australia-NSW-records-580-new-cases.html>

Brazil passes grim milestone of 600,000 Covid-19 deaths, second only to US

Brazil on Friday surpassed the grim milestone of 600,000 Covid-19 deaths, the second-highest number of fatalities in the world after the United States, according to John Hopkins University data. The South American nation, which holds half the continent's population, has now suffered 600,425 coronavirus deaths. It is only the second country to pass the 600,000 mark, after the US which has registered 712,695 deaths. Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro has been heavily criticized for his handling of the pandemic. The conservative populist leader has repeatedly downplayed the gravity of the outbreak, declared he would not get vaccinated because he had already had Covid-19, and championed the unproven malaria medicine hydroxychloroquine as a treatment.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/09/americas/brazil-passes-60000-covid-deaths-intl/index.html>

Russia's daily COVID-19 death toll hits record high 968

Russia reported 968 coronavirus-related deaths on Saturday, its highest single-day death toll since the start of the pandemic. There were 29,362 new cases recorded in the last 24 hours, the

government coronavirus task force said.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/russias-daily-covid-19-death-toll-hits-record-high-968-2021-10-09/>

COVID-19: Calls for stronger safety measures in schools amid pupil infection surge

Education unions have called for the reintroduction of extra safety measures in schools after official estimates showed around 270,000 secondary pupils had COVID-19 last week. The demand for action came as an expert warned about the level of coronavirus circulating among older children. The latest figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show that around one in 15 children in school years 7 to 11 in England are estimated to have had COVID-19 in the week to 2 October. This was the highest positivity rate for any age group and up from one in 20 during the previous seven-day period.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-calls-for-stronger-safety-measures-in-schools-amid-pupil-infection-surge-12429836>

UK records 133 COVID-19 deaths, 34950 new cases

Britain on Saturday recorded 133 deaths within 28 days of a positive COVID-19 test, a slight increase on a day earlier when 127 people died, government data showed. The figures also showed 34,950 new COVID cases, lower than a day earlier when 36,060 were recorded.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-records-133-covid-19-deaths-34950-new-cases-2021-10-09/>

'Crisis unfolding' as Papua New Guinea hospitals hit by worst Covid wave yet

Hospitals in Papua New Guinea are being pushed to the brink and morgues are overflowing, as the country suffers what health authorities say is the worst surge in Covid-19 cases since the pandemic began. The country's health care system has long been plagued by shortages of drugs, funding, an ailing infrastructure and a severe lack of health workers. Now, major hospitals around Papua New Guinea have been forced to scale down vital medical services while at least one says it may be forced to close altogether.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/08/crisis-unfolding-as-papua-new-guinea-hospitals-hit-by-worst-covid-wave-yet>

India reports over 19,000 cases and 241 deaths

India's total Covid cases have remained around 20,000 for the past four days. Friday saw 19,503 cases and 241 deaths reported from across the country. The numbers from Assam, Jharkhand, UP and Uttarakhand were yet to come at the time of filing this story and are likely to push today's tally past the 20,000 mark. The reduction in cases can be primarily attributed to the steady decline in positive cases from Kerala. In the past two weeks, the state's tally has gone through a rapid decline. Compared to 16,671 cases reported on September 25 the state reported 10,944 cases today. Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Mizoram were the only other states to report over a thousand cases. Kerala logged 120 deaths today.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-reports-over-19000-cases-and-241-deaths/articleshow/86880583.cms>

Navajo Nation reports 51 more COVID-19 cases, 1 new deaths

The Navajo Nation on Friday reported 51 more COVID-19 cases and one additional death. It was the third consecutive day that the tribe reported at least one coronavirus-related death after going six days in a row with no additional deaths. The latest numbers pushed the tribe's totals to 34,350 confirmed COVID-19 cases from the virus since the pandemic began more than a year ago. The known death toll now is 1,454. Navajo officials still are urging people to get vaccinated, wear masks while in public and minimize their travel.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-health-stress-8972fa59093ddac9f44e497aac7c6c55>

Covid Hospitalizations Rise in Colorado Even With High Vaccination Rate

Covid-19 hospitalizations are rising again in Colorado even with more than 70% of those eligible in the state vaccinated, health officials said Friday. The recent daily average has been around 900 hospitalizations, one of the highest readings since the pandemic started in March 2020, according to data from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Two weeks ago, the average was running around 875. An estimated 40% of intensive care unit patients in Colorado are infected with Covid-19, and ICU capacity is running at roughly 86%, data show. The delta variant and its relatives account for “100%” of known cases in the state, demonstrating delta’s staying power, Rachel Herlihy, state epidemiologist, said during an online news briefing.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-10-08/colorado-covid-hospitalizations-rising-even-with-high-jab-rate>

Singapore reports highest single-day rise in COVID-19 cases

Singapore's health ministry reported 3,703 new cases of COVID-19 on Saturday, the highest since the beginning of the pandemic, while it recorded 11 new deaths from the disease. A recent spike in infections after the relaxation of some restrictions has prompted Singapore to pause further reopening. It also tightened curbs from last week that limited social gatherings to two people and made work from home a default. More than 80% of Singapore's population has been vaccinated against the virus.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/singapore-reports-highest-single-day-rise-covid-19-cases-2021-10-09/>

Coronavirus deaths in Russia hit new record

Russia’s daily coronavirus death toll hit a new record on Friday amid the country’s sluggish vaccination rate and the government’s reluctance to tighten restrictions. Russia’s state coronavirus task force reported 936 new deaths on Friday, the highest daily number since the start of the pandemic. It was a third straight day when daily COVID-19 deaths topped 900. Russia already has Europe’s highest death toll in the pandemic — more than 214,000 — and the authorities’ conservative way of recording COVID-19 fatalities suggests the actual number could be even higher. On Friday, the government’s task force reported 27,246 new confirmed cases, just slightly less than Thursday’s number of 27,550, which was the highest so far this year.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-europe-russia-moscow-health-cccaf25be7a25c1403f269724c9af5b0>

Brazil tops 600,000 virus deaths amid doubts about delta

Bars in Brazil’s biggest metropolis, Sao Paulo, are full again for Friday happy hours and lawmakers in the capital have nearly done away with video sessions via Zoom. Rio de Janeiro’s beaches are packed and calls for strict social distancing seem but a memory. These developments are part of Brazil’s bid to return to pre-pandemic normalcy, even as its death toll tops 600,000, according to official data on Friday from the health ministry. Relief in both COVID-19 cases and deaths have been particularly welcome given experts’ warnings that the delta variant would produce another wave of destruction in the country with the second-most victims. So far, that hasn’t materialized.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-sao-paulo-brazil-pandemics-health-a3b942b05aa1ce3df5a1a53cbdacc3c6>

Victoria records 1965 new local cases of coronavirus

Victoria has recorded 1965 new local cases of Covid-19 on Saturday as the state again breaks a national record for the highest number of daily infections. The Department of Health also confirmed five Victorians died from the virus in the past 24 hours. More than 84 per cent of the state’s population is now single-dose vaccinated and 56.6 per cent are fully-dosed. Saturday’s case total is a national high and comes just a day after Victoria broke that record on Friday with 1838 cases. There were 41,177 vaccine doses administered in the past 24 hours and 73,443 Covid-19 test results received. Mildura in northwest Victoria last night entered a snap seven-day lockdown from 11.59pm on Friday.

<https://www.perthnow.com.au/news/victoria-records-1965-new-local-cases-of-coronavirus-c-4189016>

Pakistan's daily coronavirus case count under 1,000 for first time in three months

Pakistan records cases below the 1,000-mark for the first time since July 6. Another 26 people, meanwhile, lost their lives to the virus in the last 24 hours, pushing the death toll to 28,058. The current positivity rate is 1.99%.

<https://www.geo.tv/latest/374623-pakistans-daily-coronavirus-case-count-under-1000-for-first-time-in-three-months>