

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

2nd Sep 2020

News Highlights

Conspiracy theories take off as anti-lockdown protests grow worldwide

Conspiracy theories surrounding Covid-19 are widespread - and large-scale protests worldwide have seen demonstrators embrace the notion that the virus is a hoax. Melbourne saw a protest organiser denounce the pandemic as a 'scam' and expressed hope that this weekend will see 'tens of thousands' join the gathering dubbed 'Freedom Day.' in Trafalgar Square, London, [protestors congregated for the Unite for Freedom rally, carrying placards reading slogans such as 'Masks are Muzzles' and 'World Hoax Organization.'](#) Prominent conspiracy theorists such as Piers Corbyn and David Icke were key speakers. [Attendees also included proponents of the far-right conspiracy theory QAnon.](#)

Russia surpasses one million cases, as India witnesses two million in August alone

[Russia has become one of just four countries to confirm more than one million coronavirus infections.](#) It joins India, Brazil and the United States. However, the country recorded a lower confirmed death toll than the other four nations in this bracket. Experts have warned that the toll could be much higher, however. India, meanwhile, has seen its outbreak spread at a significant pace: [almost two million cases were reported in August alone](#), the world's highest tally in a single month thus far. New cases were reported to the tune of 64,000 a day on average - an 84% spike compared to July according to authorities. [Despite this, restrictions are being lifted to rejuvenate the economy](#) - Yahoo reporting some such moves as having met 'sharp criticism.'

The 'Covid Bubble' garners attention

Physical distancing and lockdown are among the most well-known measures to control the epidemic, but a number of countries have experimented with the scope of such restrictions. [The United Kingdom and New Zealand have expanded so-called 'Covid bubbles' beyond a single household.](#) Parts of Australia, such as Victoria are expected to incorporate a 'Covid bubble' into its roadmap towards loosening restrictions. The decision is intended as a compassionate one, to foster greater mental health during lockdowns by permitting social interaction. However, there are risks. SARS-CoV2 transmission between households is a possibility, especially if one belongs to a high risk community. Time will tell as to the efficacy of the strategy and whether it has a detrimental effect on controlling the pandemic or has benefits in terms of wellbeing and compliance.

Lockdown reimposed in South Korea

South Korea won international praise for its handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, [but the country has reimposed lockdown measures on its citizens to ward off a second wave.](#) 'We urge the public to practice complete social distancing over the next week,' said Jung Eun-kyeong, director of the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Last Thursday saw the country record its single-highest daily number of new cases. Despite the resurgence, South Korea is comparatively less-affected than many other countries. [Its decision to reimpose lockdown restrictions stands in contrast to the reopening being undertaken by even more hard-hit countries such as India](#), which is reopening despite recording 64,000

cases of Covid-19 per day on average last month.

Lockdown Exit

'Madness': Parents wait in huge queues as UK schools return after lockdown

A long queue of parents has been filmed outside a London school uniform shop as children prepare to return to school for the first time since the coronavirus lockdown. In the video filmed on Monday, the line of shoppers waiting to get into school uniform store Hewitts of Croydon, snakes down the street and around the corner in London. Schools in the UK have been closed since March 18 due to the coronavirus pandemic but Prime Minister Boris Johnson has announced all children will return to school after summer holidays in September.

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/parents-wait-in-huge-queues-london-schools-return-lockdown-084249550.html>

Coronavirus: Which parts of the UK are recovering fastest after lockdown?

The UK's major city centres are still significantly less busy and Britons are, for the most part, continuing to shun public transport, data shows. Despite a government drive to get people back in shops, restaurants, bars and workplaces, some parts of the country are recovering far more slowly than others from the coronavirus lockdown. Coastal towns are busier, but cities are still quiet

<https://news.sky.com/story/coronavirus-which-parts-of-the-uk-are-recovering-fastest-after-lockdown-12052386>

Venice Reclaims Spotlight as 1st COVID-Era Film Fest Opens

Venice is reclaiming its place as a top cultural destination with the opening of the Venice Film Festival — the first major in-person cinema showcase of the coronavirus era after Cannes canceled and other international festivals opted to go mostly online this year. But don't be fooled. The 77th edition of the world's oldest film festival will look nothing like its predecessors. The public will be barred from the red carpet, Hollywood stars and films will be largely absent and face masks will be required indoors and out as the festival opens Wednesday.

<https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2020/09/01/world/europe/ap-eu-italy-venice-film-festival.html>

Russia Passes 1 Million Covid-19 Cases as Epidemic Simmers

Russia became the fourth country to pass 1 million confirmed cases of Covid-19, joining the U.S., India and Brazil, on the day schools across the country reopened for the new academic year. The Russian government's virus response center reported 4,729 new coronavirus infections Tuesday, bringing the total to 1,000,048. The number of new daily cases has gradually declined from a peak of more than 11,000 in May. The death toll increased by 123 to 17,299, a mortality rate that remains much lower than that of many other large nations. The number of fatalities is also significantly lower than those reported by the Federal Statistics Service, which said there were nearly 25,000 Covid-19 related deaths in May and June alone, the most recent data available. While a strict nationwide lockdown in the spring helped tame the initial surge, new infections have remained stubbornly high and averaged more than 5,000 per day in August. Several countries in Europe are now facing a second wave of the epidemic, raising concerns that Russia could see a spike in infections as schools reopen.

<https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/russia-passes-1-million-covid-19-cases-as-epidemic-simmers-1.1487729>

Russia's Virus Cases Exceed 1 Million, Globally 4th Highest

Russia's tally of confirmed coronavirus cases surpassed 1 million on Tuesday as authorities reported 4,729 new cases. With a total of 1,000,048 reported cases, Russia has the fourth largest caseload in the world after the U.S., Brazil and India. Over 815,000 people have so far recovered, authorities said, and more than 17,000 have died. Experts say the true toll of the pandemic is much higher than all reported figures, due to limited testing, missed mild cases and concealment of cases by some governments, among other factors. As of Tuesday, Russia has lifted most lockdown restrictions in the majority of the country's regions.

<https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2020/09/01/world/europe/ap-eu-russia-virus-outbreak.html>

Asia's factories shaking off COVID gloom, China shines

Factories across Europe and Asia continued to shake off the coronavirus gloom in August as the global economy gradually emerges from a downturn triggered by the health crisis, thanks in part to massive fiscal and monetary stimulus programmes. Surveys showing an expansion in manufacturing activity may reduce pressure on policymakers to take bolder steps to avert a deeper recession. Many analysts expect recovery to be feeble, however, as renewed waves of infections curb business activity and prevent some nations from fully reopening their economies. Fears of a resurgence in infections in some economies may discourage firms from boosting capital expenditure and delay a sustained rebound, some analysts say.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-global-economy/asias-factories-shaking-off-covid-gloom-china-shines-idUSKBN25S3ES>

Texts books and face masks, Europe's children return to school

Tens of millions of pupils returned to school in France, Poland and Russia on Tuesday, their rucksacks loaded with exercise books, geometry sets and, for many, face masks to protect them from a resurgent coronavirus pandemic. Hand cleansing stations, social distancing and staggered play time will become the new normal as countries across Europe seek ways to get children back into the classroom safely and their economies functioning once again. But they do so at a time when infections rates are spiraling upwards across the continent and there are widespread concerns that the return to schools and offices, the autumn flu season and excess mortality in winter could drive a second wave.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-europe-education/texts-books-and-face-masks-europes-children-return-to-school-idUKKBN25S4DR>

Face mask sales soar as Swedes eye potential guideline change

Sweden is seeing a spike in demand for face masks, several drug stores said, ahead of a possible U-turn by the authorities, who have so far doubted their effectiveness in fighting the spread of the new coronavirus. Unlike most other European countries, Sweden has kept many businesses, restaurants and most schools open, while not recommending the use of face masks, which remain a rare sight unlike in neighbouring Denmark, Norway and Finland. But after the public health agency (FHM) said two weeks ago that it may issue new recommendations, Swedes appear to be stockpiling. Face mask sales at online pharmacist Apotea have increased to around 400,000 units a week in the past two to three weeks from 150,000 in previous weeks, CEO Par Svardson said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-sweden-facemasks/face-mask-sales-soar-as-swedes-eye-potential-guideline-change-idUSKBN25R22Q>

Exit Strategies

Brazil's Bolsonaro extends COVID-19 welfare payments key to popularity

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro on Tuesday extended until the end of the year payments for low-income Brazilians hit by the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, a program that has boosted his popularity but created tension with his finance team. The stipend, for poor and informal sector workers who have seen their earnings wrecked by the crisis, will be halved to 300 reais (41.37 pounds) a month, Bolsonaro told reporters in the capital Brasilia. Recent opinion polls show the payments have helped raise the right-wing president's popularity, even in the poorer northeastern region of the country, once a stronghold of the left. The program has also been widely credited with preventing a record economic slump from turning into a depression. Both the Bovespa stock market and the Brazilian real were up more than 2% on Tuesday.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-brazil-politics/brazils-bolsonaro-extends-covid-19-welfare-payments-key-to-popularity-idUKKBN25S54X>

South Florida restaurants and casinos reopen as governor vows no more COVID-19 shutdowns

In Miami-Dade County, most indoor dining has been banned in the county since early July to stop the spread of the coronavirus. "This does not mean this is over by a long shot," Mayor Carlos Gimenez said in an online news conference. "While we're heading in the right direction, we're not out of the woods." The loosening up of restrictions in South Florida comes after Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said he was considering allowing South Florida to move into Phase 2, which would allow more businesses to resume operations.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/news/2020/09/01/coronavirus-florida-desantis-vows-never-lock-down-state-again/3454055001/>

Lockdown in Co Kildare lifted following weeks of restrictions

The lockdown in Co Kildare has been lifted with immediate effect, the Government has confirmed. The Government introduced public health measures in the county on August 7 following outbreaks of Covid-19 cases. In a statement, the Government said that public health measures in the county will be aligned with those introduced nationally on August 18.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/republic-of-ireland/lockdown-in-co-kildare-lifted-following-weeks-of-restrictions-39491787.html>

How will local lockdowns affect schools in England?

Q: According to the government's guidance issued on Friday evening for schools in England, how will future lockdowns affect them? A: The new guidance lists four levels of lockdown "tiers", which are most likely to be local ones such as those in Leicester. The categories range from tier one, the lowest, in which all schools would remain open, to tier four, in which remote learning would be in place for all pupils other than the children of key workers and vulnerable pupils. But unlike the national lockdown from March, alternative provision and special needs schools would remain fully open.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/aug/30/how-will-local-lockdowns-affect-schools-in-england>

India Paid the Price of Lockdown for Little Reward

Plenty of places have been pummeled by the pandemic, though few have notched a descent as steep. And unlike Malaysia, Singapore or China, the shutdown in India didn't curtail the spread of the virus. The country is now vying with Brazil for second-place behind the U.S. with the most cases. Infections numbered more than 3.62 million as of Monday and there have been 64,469 deaths. (The population is 1.3 billion.) India paid the economic price without the public health dividend.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-09-01/india-gdp-lockdown-led-to-huge-contraction-as-covid-19-spreads>

India eases virus restrictions as cases near 3.7 million

Experts say India, the world's third most affected country, is fast becoming the new coronavirus epicenter and its case total is likely to soon pass Brazil and ultimately the United States. Most of India's cases are in western Maharashtra state and the four southern states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka, but new surges are being recorded in the country's vast hinterlands, overwhelming the poorly equipped healthcare system. In poorer states, the federal government has deployed special teams to monitor the situation. "This was to be expected," said Dr. Gagandeep Kang, an infectious diseases expert at the Christian Medical College at Vellore in southern India. "It was inevitable that the numbers would climb."

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/india-eases-virus-restrictions-cases-105039899.html>

Coronavirus: India sees nearly two million cases in August

India has reported nearly two million Covid-19 cases in August, the highest monthly tally in the world since the pandemic began. August was also the worst month for fatalities with 28,000 virus

deaths. With 3.6 million confirmed cases, India has the third-highest caseload in the world, after the US and Brazil. The government continues to lift restrictions to try to boost an economy that lost millions of jobs because of a strict lockdown which began in March. In August, India saw an average of 64,000 cases per day - an 84% hike from average daily cases in July, according to official data. This number is the highest in the world - for example, the US, which has the most number of cases, saw 47,000 daily cases on average last month.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-53981828>

Japan's karaoke bars adapt to the Covid era

The large chains have introduced apps that turn your smartphone into a remote control to avoid touching communal buttons or screens. Another upgrade synchronises and scrolls the lyrics on your phone, should social distancing mean you are sitting too far from the screen to read the words properly. Some chains allow the really nervous self-isolator to sing alone in a room in their establishment but be linked online to any other rooms in their nationwide network to form a virtual group. Arguably the most helpful of all in terms of coaxing people back to the microphone has been Joysound's flagship offering: a series of settings that adjust the tone and clarity of your output to compensate for singing through a mask.

<https://www.ft.com/content/e6027d3c-fa8f-453e-b8fd-989017883253>

Victorian Government may use traffic light system to lead businesses out of stage 4 coronavirus lockdown

On Monday, Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews said a roadmap to reopening the state would be announced in detail on Sunday, to allow the Government to gather another week of data. The first steps in designing the roadmap were outlined in documents seen by the ABC from the State Government's first consultation call with industry leaders on Monday night. Drafting of the plan will be a week-long process involving more than 10 sector working groups and six COVID-safe principles will apply:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-09-01/victoria-coronavirus-restrictions-eased-with-traffic-light-plan/12614274>

What is the COVID 'bubble' concept, and could it work in Australia?

The concept of a COVID-19 "germ bubble" refers to close contacts with whom we don't practise mask use or keep physical distancing. In strict lockdown, this generally means just the members of your own household. But several countries, such as New Zealand and the United Kingdom, have experimented with bubbles larger than a single household. Victorian Premier Dan Andrews will unveil a roadmap out of restrictions on Sunday. Many will be keen to see if a bubble strategy is part of this, after Chief Health Officer Brett Sutton confirmed the concept is under "active consideration". Extended bubbles mean your household can nominate other people or households with whom you could have close contact. These would need to be exclusive, so the infection risk is contained, and your nominated households would be required to live in the same town or city.

<https://theconversation.com/what-is-the-covid-bubble-concept-and-could-it-work-in-australia-144938>

Auckland Exits Lockdown as New Zealand Again Eyes Elimination

New Zealand's largest city has exited lockdown after the government said a Covid-19 outbreak there has been brought under control and it remains on track to again eliminate the virus from the community.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/other/auckland-exits-lockdown-as-new-zealand-again-eyes-elimination/ar-BB18wVob>

Covid 19 coronavirus: The radical plan to end Melbourne's lockdown early

With clarity still lacking on how or even exactly when Melbourne will emerge from stage 4 restrictions, one suggestion gaining traction is to ring-fence individual suburbs while the rest of the city goes back to something approaching normality. The city's coronavirus restrictions should come

to an end in two weeks' time and federal politicians have begun to demand the state provide some certainty to residents as to when they can expect to come out of curfew – and go back to Bunnings.

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=12361097

South Africa's Absa PMI expands on easing lockdown

South Africa's seasonally-adjusted Absa Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) expanded in August as an easing of the coronavirus restrictions lifted business activity and sales. The index, which gauges manufacturing activity in Africa's most industrialised economy, rose to 57.3 points in August from 51.2 points in July, staying above the 50-point mark that separates expansion from contraction. "The improvement in demand was not only due to South Africa moving to a lower lockdown level, but was also supported by an uptick in export orders," Absa said in a statement.

<https://af.reuters.com/article/investingNews/idAFKBN25S4HP-OZABS>

As lockdown begins, Hungary reopens borders to some eastern neighbours

Hungary has decided to exempt tourists visiting from three neighbouring states from a lockdown of its borders that took effect on Tuesday, provided they test negative for COVID-19 beforehand, prompting a rebuke from the European Commission. The EU executive said Hungary's move to admit visitors from the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia but not from other EU member states amounted to discrimination and was illegal. Hungary said last week it would close its borders to foreigners from Tuesday to curb a rise in coronavirus cases. Returning Hungarian citizens can leave a 14-day quarantine only if they provide two negative COVID tests.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-hungary-borders/as-lockdown-begins-hungary-reopens-borders-to-some-eastern-neighbours-idUKKBN25S3U7>

New Zealanders wear face masks as Auckland lockdown lifted

Schools and businesses reopened in Auckland on Monday after the lifting of a lockdown in New Zealand's largest city to contain the resurgence of the coronavirus, but face masks were made mandatory on public transport across the country. The Pacific nation of 5 million people had appeared to have succeeded in halting community transmission of COVID-19, but a fresh outbreak in Auckland prompted the government to place the city back in lockdown earlier this month. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern scaled back the restrictions in Auckland on Sunday, but made masks compulsory on public transport.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-newzealand/new-zealanders-wear-face-masks-as-auckland-lockdown-lifted-idUKKBN25R0EF>

Back to school: how European classrooms are coping with COVID

Schools across Europe are reopening as summer break ends and governments insist that students return to the classroom after months of online learning due to the coronavirus pandemic. Reuters looks a little closer at what countries are doing...

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-europe-education-f/factbox-back-to-school-how-european-classrooms-are-coping-with-covid-idUSKBN25S4L4>

Colombia expands reopening as coronavirus cases stabilize

Airports, bus terminals, restaurants and gyms reopened in most of Colombia on Tuesday as the South American nation attempts to reignite its economy following months of restrictions for the coronavirus pandemic. The step expanded previous moves that allowed shops, construction sites, shopping malls and factories to resume operations in June in most of the country's cities. Hospital occupancy rates and deaths from the new coronavirus have stabilized across much of Colombia over the past 10 days, prompting the national government to lift more of the emergency measures that had been in place for five months, including a ban on most people from traveling within the country.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/colombia-expands-reopening-as-coronavirus-cases-stabilize/2020/09/01/adbda0de-eca0-11ea-bd08-1b10132b458f_story.html

Bhutan to gradually lift coronavirus lockdown

Bhutan, the remote Himalayan kingdom famous for measuring gross national happiness, on Tuesday took the first steps to lift its coronavirus lockdown, saying there was limited community transmission. The country of 750,000 people between India and China -- one of the few nations in the world that have yet to register a virus death -- has so far recorded 225 infections. "Experiences in many countries reveal a surge in Covid-19 cases, mostly detected in the second week of post-lockdown," Prime Minister Lotay Tshering, a doctor who continues to practise on weekends, said in a television address late Monday.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200901-bhutan-to-gradually-lift-coronavirus-lockdown>

Algeria approves more measures to ease coronavirus lockdown

Algerian authorities said on Monday they will carry out further measures to ease a coronavirus lockdown from Sept. 1, including lifting a ban on some cultural activities such as reopening museums and libraries. Nurseries would also be reopened with 50% of their capacity but prohibit the use of air conditioners and access to children by family members. The new steps will also end a paid leave for pregnant women and those with children under 14 years. Algeria has already eased restrictions linked to the novel coronavirus, including reopening some businesses, mosques, leisure venues and beaches. It has so far reported 44,494 infections and 1,510 deaths.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-algeria/algeria-approves-more-measures-to-ease-coronavirus-lockdown-idUSKBN25R2SD>

Partisan Exits

Covid-19 coronavirus: US avoids joint vaccine plan that aims to prevent hoarding

The White House today pushed back on concerns expressed by the World Health Organisation after a United States health official said a coronavirus vaccine might be approved without completing full trials. Separately the Trump Administration said it will not join a global effort to develop, manufacture and distribute a coronavirus vaccine, in part because the WHO is involved. The Washington Post reports that the decision to spurn the Covax facility could shape the course of the pandemic and America's role in health diplomacy. Covax aims to speed vaccine development and avoid the hoarding of supplies. It would secure doses for all countries and distribute them to the most high-risk people. The plan is backed by New Zealand, Britain, Japan, Germany, Canada and the European Commission. Countries are still able to pursue bilateral deals with firms on vaccines.

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=12361437

The UK's Anti-Lockdown Movement Has Welcomed David Icke and QAnon Believers

At London's "Freedom Rally", David Icke was cheered on by crowds waving placards peddling everything from anti-mask statements to the bizarre QAnon conspiracy theory.

https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/y3z4jj/anti-lockdown-movement-conspiracy-theories-uk

Anti-lockdown, anti-vaccine and anti-mask protesters crowd London's Trafalgar Square

Police urged demonstrators to disperse under social distancing laws on Saturday after several thousand anti-lockdown, anti-mask and anti-vaccine protestors gathered in London's Trafalgar Square. The Unite For Freedom rally saw a vast mask-free crowd carrying signs and placards including "World Hoax Organisation" and "Masks are muzzles." Many demanded an end to government health measures and the right to catch coronavirus — should it even exist — without state interference. Key speakers at the event included conspiracy theorists David Icke and Piers Corbyn.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/coronavirus-anti-lockdown-protest-traffic-square-anti-vaccine-mask-hoax-a9695561.html>

Coronavirus Russia: Teachers' union warns staff could be forced to take unproven

Sputnik V Covid-19 vaccine

A Russian teachers' union has warned its members could find themselves coerced into taking the country's new coronavirus vaccine, which has been shipped to clinics and approved for use before phase three trials have been completed. Russia is the first country to licence a Covid-19 vaccine, calling it "Sputnik V" in homage to the famous Soviet satellite, but Western experts have warned against its use until all internationally approved testing and regulatory steps have been taken, a call dismissed by Moscow. The vaccine will be mandatory for members of Russia's armed forces, according to Vladimir Putin's defence minister Sergei Shoigu, but offered to teachers and doctors on an entirely voluntary basis. However, Uchitel, a small independent teachers' union, has launched a petition to ensure no mandatory measure is imposed on its members ahead of the reopening of schools on 1 September.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/coronavirus-russia-sputnik-v-vaccine-teachers-union-uchitel-putin-a9697436.html>

Melbourne anti-lockdown protest organiser calls coronavirus a 'scam'

A Victorian man who was arrested after planning a Melbourne anti-lockdown rally has said he hopes "tens of thousands" will attend a new protest this Saturday. According to A Current Affair, Windsor resident Solihin Millin was charged with inciting others to breach the chief health officer's directions last week. The 76-year-old has remained defiant despite his arrest, telling the program the September 5 demonstrations, set to take place across Australia's capital cities and dubbed "Freedom Day" by supporters, will continue - although if he attends, it will be a breach of his bail conditions. Mr Millin, whose social media profiles are littered with coronavirus conspiracy theory material, labelled the coronavirus pandemic a "scam" and said the planned protest posed no threat to the public.

<https://www.news.com.au/world/coronavirus/australia/melbourne-antilockdown-protest-organiser-calls-coronavirus-a-scam/news-story/f82f8d59bbda8abf928fc4cab9ed8ff5>

Two men charged with planning Melbourne anti-lockdown protest

Police in Victoria have charged two men over the "coordination and encouragement" of an anti-lockdown protest to be held in Melbourne on Saturday. Victoria police said the men, a 28-year-old from Coburg and a 38-year-old from Epping, had been arrested and charged with incitement after officers searched their homes on Tuesday morning. In a statement, police said officers seized several items including mobile phones, laptops and postage items. The men have both been bailed to appear at the Melbourne magistrates court on 4 February. Dreamed up by a coalition of online groups broadly linked around a mishmash of conspiracy theories, the so-called Day of Freedom protest scheduled for 5 September has been planned in defiance of lockdown restrictions, mandates on mask-wearing in Victoria, 5G, vaccinations and "child trafficking and pedophilia".

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/sep/01/two-men-charged-with-planning-melbourne-anti-lockdown-protest>

Meet Germany's Bizarre Anti-Lockdown Protesters

A strange mix of conspiracy theorists, far-right extremists and ordinary citizens have taken to the streets. Why?...

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/31/opinion/germany-covid-lockdown-protests.html>

Continued Lockdown

Coronavirus: Pupils 'months behind' and Rashford continues child poverty fight

The lockdown has left children in England three months behind in their learning, with boys and poor pupils worst hit, a survey of 3,000 head teachers and teachers suggests. The National Foundation for Educational Research says the learning gap between rich and poor pupils has grown by 46%. The Department of Education has said it's determined that children should not miss out because of

coronavirus. Find out more here about the return to school and whether you have to send your child back.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53979555>

Lockdown's legacy on UK's poorest children: Richer pupils 46% further ahead than worse-off peers

Shocking new data lays bare devastating impact of lockdown on school children In a poll of 3,000 teachers and leaders, 98 per cent believe pupils are behind Teachers estimated on average that their pupils were three months behind Survey found gap between disadvantaged and well-off increased by 46 per cent

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8684639/Lockdowns-legacy-UKs-poorest-children-Richer-pupils-46-ahead-worse-peers.html>

Poland bans direct flights from Spain, Israel due to coronavirus fears

Poland is banning from Wednesday direct flights from 44 countries including Spain, Israel and Romania in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus in the Central European country, the government said on Tuesday. The United States, Malta, Montenegro, Mexico, Brasil, Argentina and India are also on the list of countries, but local media reported that Russia and China had been removed from it.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-poland-flights/poland-bans-direct-flights-from-spain-israel-due-to-coronavirus-fears-idUKKBN25S4M4?il=0>

Australia virus cases drop after lengthy Melbourne lockdown

Australia reported fewer than 100 new coronavirus cases Monday, the lowest number in two months as authorities appeared to bring an outbreak in the country's second-largest city under control. Victoria state, which has been battling a second wave of infections in Melbourne, recorded just 73 cases after peaking above 700 in late July, providing hope for a way out of a strict city-wide lockdown. Melbourne residents are currently enduring a raft of restrictions including an overnight curfew, while all non-essential businesses remain closed until at least September 13.

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200831-australia-virus-cases-drop-after-lengthy-melbourne-lockdown>

In China's Xinjiang, forced medication and citizens hosed down accompanies lockdown

When police arrested the middle-aged Uighur woman at the height of China's coronavirus outbreak, she was crammed into a cell with dozens of other women in a detention centre. There, she said, she was forced to drink a medicine that made her feel weak and nauseous, guards watching as she gulped. She and the others also had to strip naked once a week and cover their faces as guards hosed them and their cells down with disinfectant "like firemen," she said. "It was scalding," recounted the woman by phone from Xinjiang, declining to be named out of fear of retribution. "My hands were ruined, my skin was peeling." The government in China's far northwest Xinjiang region is resorting to draconian measures to combat the coronavirus, including physically locking residents in homes, imposing quarantines of more than 40 days and arresting those who do not comply.

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=12361029

New Zealand lockdown led to biggest spike in welfare claims in modern history

The number of people claiming benefits grew by nearly 12% during New Zealand's first month of lockdown, a new report has found, representing a demand for social welfare "unprecedented in modern history", the government says. Analysis by the Ministry of Social Development showed the jump in April was the biggest monthly rise in 24 years, "noting that this period includes the global financial crisis and the Asian crisis". New Zealand's handling of the coronavirus pandemic has been globally lauded with fewer than 2,000 infections and just 22 deaths. But the economic consequences of multiple lockdowns have been catastrophic, say, economists, with unemployment figures forecast to peak as high as 26%, at worst estimate

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/01/new-zealand-lockdown-led-to-biggest-spike-in-welfare-claims-in-modern-history>

Australia prisoners set fire in cells as virus lockdown sparks unrest

Inmates at a high-security Australian prison lit fires, smashed windows and flooded their cells with water, authorities said on Tuesday, after a lockdown sparked by a coronavirus outbreak resulted in a shortage of staff and services. The unrest began a day earlier at Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre in the city of Brisbane, four days after local media said the prison went into lockdown due to two staff testing positive to COVID-19. A shortage of replacement staff for those stood down to get tested for the virus had resulted in problems delivering basic services like meals and medication, the authorities said.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-australia-prison/australia-prisoners-set-fire-in-cells-as-virus-lockdown-sparks-unrest-idUKKBN25S4CZ>

Ireland lifts local COVID-19 lockdown, national picture still 'uncertain'

Ireland lifted an extended local lockdown on Monday in the eastern county of Kildare ahead of schedule, but the whole country remains under some of Europe's strictest COVID-19 restrictions. Ireland closed or limited business on Aug. 7 in three of its 26 counties - Kildare, Laois and Offaly - and their residents were barred from travelling outside their county. Ten days later, an uptick in coronavirus cases prompted a significant tightening in measures nationwide. Authorities cut to six the number of visitors allowed in a home, banned fans from all sport events and urged people to avoid public transport where they could.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-ireland/ireland-lifts-local-covid-19-lockdown-national-picture-still-uncertain-idUKKBN25R2AM>

Scientific Viewpoint

COVID-19 often goes undiagnosed in hospital workers; virus may impair heart functions

A high proportion of COVID-19 infections among U.S. healthcare personnel appear to go undetected, according to a report on Monday in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Between April and June, among more than 3,000 frontline workers in 12 states, roughly 1 in 20 had antibody evidence of a previous COVID-19 infection, but 69% of those infections had never been diagnosed. Among those with antibodies to the novel coronavirus, about one-third did not recall having symptoms in the preceding months, nearly half did not suspect that they had been infected, and some two-thirds had never had a positive COVID-19 test. Infections among frontline healthcare personnel may be going undetected, the study authors say, because some infections may be only minimally symptomatic or asymptomatic and also because personnel with symptoms may not always have access to testing. COVID-19 antibodies were less common among workers who reported using a face covering for all patient encounters and more common among those who reported a shortage of personal protective equipment. The researchers call for more frequent testing of healthcare personnel and universal use of face coverings in hospitals.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-science/covid-19-often-goes-undiagnosed-in-hospital-workers-virus-may-impair-heart-functions-idUKKBN25R2LK>

AstraZeneca expands Covid-19 vaccine deal as final trials begin

AstraZeneca has expanded an agreement with Oxford Biomedica to scale up production of its potential Covid-19 vaccine, as the race continues to find an effective prevention for the deadly virus. Under the supply agreement, the Oxford-based cell and gene therapy firm said it would produce tens of millions of doses of AstraZeneca's potential vaccine, AZD1222, for 18 months, which could be extended by a further 18 months into 2023. It will be made at the firm's three manufacturing suites at its new centre, Oxbox, in Oxford. Two of the suites will be ready to use in the next two months, earlier than expected. AstraZeneca will pay Oxford Biomedica £50m under the deal.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/sep/01/astrazeneca-covid-19-vaccine-trials-oxford-biomedica-coronavirus>

Scotland to get dedicated Covid-19 tracing app

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has announced a new "proximity tracing app" to combat the spread of Covid-19. Ms Sturgeon described Protect Scotland as a "significant enhancement" to the existing test and protect system. And she vowed that important assurances about privacy and confidentiality would be given when it launches later this month. She added: "I encourage everyone to download and use the app as soon as it becomes available." The announcement comes as the number of confirmed cases increased by 154, including 66 in the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde area.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-53988228>

How to use serum viscosity to understand COVID-19 patient risk

2020 has been a strange year all round. An unknown virus, probably in a bat colony in central China mutated to allow it to infect humans too. Within 3 months of the virus being identified as Corona Virus SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2), 90% of the world had shut down... Steve Walton, follows up on his previous article How COVID-19 kills: a tale of two conditions with an outline around how serum viscosity measurements can be used to identify high risk patients for further investigation.

<https://www.labnews.co.uk/article/2030824/covid-19-is-here-to-stay>

School reopening and flu season mean surge in Covid-19 patients, says WHO Europe director

Dr Hans Kluge said he 'wouldn't be surprised' if hospital admissions surged. Warned Britain facing 'three phenomena' in colder months, on top of Covid. They include flu season, children mingling at school and excess elderly deaths

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8684847/School-reopening-flu-season-mean-surge-Covid-19-patients-says-Europe-director.html>

Derbyshire technology firm develops new scanning system to detect Covid-19 symptoms

A global leader in temperature measurement technology based in Derbyshire has developed a new screening system which can detect a key Covid-19 symptom. Ametek Land, based at Dronfield, near Chesterfield, has used its expertise to develop the Viralert 3, which it says can accurately detect elevated temperatures, a symptom of coronavirus. The technology can be installed in buildings and, according to the firm, it has already attracted interest across a variety of sectors, including healthcare, commercial, education, transportation, manufacturing, and sports. The system provides a solution for scanning visitors at entry points - and is already in use at Sheffield's Hallamshire Tennis, Squash and Racquetball Club and a medical practice in Dronfield.

<https://www.business-live.co.uk/technology/derbyshire-technology-firm-develops-new-18842073>

EU seeks to improve cross-border co-ordination as Covid-19 spikes

EU member states are exploring how to better co-ordinate the identification of Covid-19 hotspots and the management of cross-border travel as the continent grapples with a surge in infections. European governments are on high alert after a sharp rise in the number of coronavirus cases in some areas in recent weeks, and are keen to avoid a repeat of the chaotic scenes early in the pandemic, when multiple capitals pursued their own approach to border closures within the Schengen travel area. A briefing paper for an EU ambassadors' meeting in Brussels on Wednesday identifies five possible areas for improved cross-border co-ordination, including the development of common quarantine rules, the use of agreed data sources and better mapping practices.

<https://www.ft.com/content/989e0a76-058d-46d4-a0ce-876dd5acbf9>

Europe's fractured contact tracing linked to post-holiday Covid-19 surge

In early August, seven groups of young people returned home from Croatia, Greece and Malta to the Italian province of Padua, one of Europe's early battlegrounds against Covid-19, and tested positive for the virus. The new clusters, involving at least 25 positive cases, led to 159 other people also being placed in isolation for having had potential contact with the virus, according to public health documents reviewed by the Financial Times. But the positive cases were only detected by track-and-trace protocols after they had developed symptoms — a lag of weeks in many cases. Faster tracing across borders or testing before travel would have limited the spread, experts say.

<https://www.ft.com/content/86a818bb-a5d7-495c-98c8-6209f019ca71>

Global COVID-19 total tops 25 million amid WHO warning

In other developments, the World Health Organization (WHO) today said it received support from the European Commission for the COVAX vaccine initiative and shared results of a new survey that showed widespread disruption of healthcare delivery. The global COVID-19 total has risen to 25,330,679 cases, along with 848,030 deaths, according to the Johns Hopkins online dashboard.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/08/global-covid-19-total-tops-25-million-amid-who-warning>

'Second coronavirus lockdown is accepting we learned nothing from first wave,' warns expert

The health secretary Matt Hancock has recently warned Brits that the government may need to put extensive lockdown measures back in place if there is a second wave of Covid-19. However, when appearing on This Morning today, Prof Carl Heneghan explained how this move would be the government's way of accepting they learned nothing from the past six months. When chatting to Holly Willoughby and Phillip Schofield, the expert shared his views on the pandemic and how he feels another lockdown is not inevitable.

<https://metro.co.uk/2020/09/01/second-lockdown-accepting-learned-nothing-first-wave-warns-expert-13206339/>

Oxford vaccine professor warns that human activity is increasing the threat of viruses passed from animals

The scientist leading Oxford University's push for a coronavirus vaccine has warned of an increasing risk of disease outbreaks spreading from animals to people. Professor Sarah Gilbert said human activity is driving the rising threat, adding the risk is unlikely to diminish in the future as globalisation continues. "Greater population density, greater travel, deforestation - all of these things make it more likely that these outbreaks will happen and then something will spread," she told The Independent. "Because of the way things have been going in the world, it's more likely we'll have zoonotic infections causing outbreaks in the future." A zoonotic infection is a disease caused by a pathogen, such as a bacterium or virus, that has jumped from an animal to a human. Most researchers believe Covid-19 emerged in bats and infected humans via another animal, probably in a market in Wuhan, China. Other deadly diseases such as Ebola, Sars and the West Nile Virus have also originated in animals.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/health/oxford-university-coronavirus-vaccine-professor-warning-614314>

Avoid false hope on coronavirus vaccine, discontinue lockdown: Health experts write to PM Modi

Seven months into the coronavirus pandemic in the country, the Joint Task Force of eminent public health experts on Monday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said it must be assumed that an effective vaccine against the novel coronavirus "would not be available in the near future". They also said that any false sense of hope that this panacea is just around the corner must be avoided. In a joint statement, experts of the Indian Public Health Association (IPHA), Indian Association of Preventive and Social Medicine (IAPSM), and Indian Association of Epidemiologists (IAE) said, "Vaccines do not have any role in current ongoing coronavirus pandemic control in India. It must be assumed that an effective vaccine would not be available in near future. We must avoid false sense

of hope that this panacea is just around the corner." The group's third joint statement on hope for a coronavirus vaccine against Covid-19 states, "Vaccines with proven efficacy and safety, as and when available, should be administered according to the WHO's 'strategic allocation' approach or a multi-tiered risk-based approach."

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/avoid-false-hope-on-coronavirus-vaccine-discontinue-lockdown-health-experts-w-rite-to-pm-modi-1717267-2020-09-01>

Australia virus cases drop after lengthy Melbourne lockdown

Australia reported fewer than 100 new coronavirus cases Monday, the lowest number in two months as authorities appeared to bring an outbreak in the country's second-largest city under control. Victoria state, which has been battling a second wave of infections in Melbourne, recorded just 73 cases after peaking above 700 in late July, providing hope for a way out of a strict city-wide lockdown. Melbourne residents are currently enduring a raft of restrictions including an overnight curfew, while all non-essential businesses remain closed until at least September 13.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-08-australia-virus-cases-lengthy-melbourne.html>

Coronavirus: Countries exiting lockdown too soon is a 'recipe for disaster', WHO warns

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has issued a stark warning for countries heading out of lockdown too soon. Eight months into the coronavirus pandemic, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has acknowledged people's longing for normality to return. At a press conference in Geneva on Tuesday, the director-general said WHO fully supported the efforts to reopen economies and societies, but they wanted to see it done safely. "No country can just pretend the pandemic is over," he said.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/122624341/coronavirus-countries-exiting-lockdown-too-soon-is-a-recipe-for-disaster-who-warns>

Coronavirus Resurgence

UAE reports over 500 new COVID-19 cases for second consecutive day

The United Arab Emirates recorded over 500 new COVID-19 infections for the second successive day on Tuesday after a rise in cases in the Middle East financial hub. The government's communications office said on Twitter there had been 574 new infections but no deaths in the previous 24 hours, following 541 new infections and two deaths reported a day earlier. Schools in the UAE reopened this week, though some will continue with only remote learning after suspected cases among employees, state news agency WAM reported, citing the education ministry. The report did not identify the schools. Daily infections are at their highest since 683 cases were recorded on July 5. There have been periodic spikes in cases since daily infections peaked in May.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-emirates/uae-reports-over-500-new-covid-19-cases-for-second-consecutive-day-idUKKBN25S5ZN>

GMB's Dr Hilary warns COVID-19 hospitalisations are set to rapidly rise again

Good Morning Britain 's Dr Hilary Jones has warned the UK is likely about to see a rapid rise in COVID-19 cases and hospitalisations. He revealed we generally follow France's trend with the virus, and have been two weeks behind them since the pandemic began. This means that in just under a fortnight, the UK can expect a rapid increase in cases. Hosts Piers Morgan and Susanna Reid quizzed Hilary on the topic after Piers, who travelled to France on holiday this year, was concerned about the rising figures in the country.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/tv/tv-news/gmbs-dr-hilary-warns-covid-22608851>

Coronavirus: Small Covid-19 cluster confirmed in Highlands

A cluster of five cases of Covid-19 has been identified in the Grantown on Spey area. NHS Highland said contact tracing was being carried out. Close contacts who have been identified by the health

board's health protection team have been advised to self-isolate. NHS Highland has urged people in the area and the wider Highlands region to adhere to national guidance on how to prevent the spread of the infection.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-53984558>

Germany 'can and will' avoid second coronavirus lockdown as economy rebounds

Germany is in a V-shaped economic recovery as it bounces back more strongly than expected from the effects of the first phase of the coronavirus pandemic, the economy minister said Tuesday. German GDP is expected to fall 5.8 percent in 2020, a narrower recession than the 6.3 percent drop projected earlier, Peter Altmaier said, signalling that the country is emerging from the worst of the crisis. Altmaier said Germany "can and will" avoid lockdowns like Germans lived through in March and April. "Rising infection rates will be countered by targeted and regionally limited measures, so that the economic recovery can continue to develop gradually in the coming months," he said

<https://www.thelocal.de/20200901/germany-can-and-will-avoid-second-coronavirus-lockdown-minister>

Bolton asks government to keep borough in local lockdown after 'spike linked to pub crawl after trip to Spain'

Local lockdown restrictions in Bolton could remain after a huge spike in coronavirus cases. Council bosses held an emergency meeting this morning (September 1) after a 'sudden, concerning and unpredicted' spike resulting in a 200pc increase in positive Covid-19 tests. Greater Manchester and Bolton Council are both now calling for the town to remain in local lockdown restrictions as the borough tips towards the government's 'red' threshold for cases. The MEN understands Greater Manchester leaders met this morning to discuss a major spike in cases in the borough since the Government announced it was to be taken out of lockdown measures from midnight tonight.

<https://www.lancs.live/news/lancashire-news/bolton-asks-government-keep-borough-18860668>

Coronavirus: Spain PM rules out lockdown as infections rise

Spain will not return to a state of emergency that puts the country in lockdown again Pedro Sánchez, the prime minister, said as his government struggles to contain Europe's highest number of coronavirus infections. As experts increasingly speak of Spain facing a possible second wave of the pandemic Mr Sánchez said in a radio interview that there was "no justification for a state of emergency with equally harsh measures for the whole territory".

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/coronavirus-spain-pm-rules-out-lockdown-as-infections-rise-0n2vg8kq3>

France Tightens Mask Protocols After Surge in Virus Infections

From Tuesday, masks will be mandatory for companies with groups working in enclosed spaces, Labor Minister Elisabeth Borne said Sunday on BFM TV. While opera singers are among those who can be granted exemptions, mask-wearing is becoming entrenched in daily life. Cities from Paris to Marseille are making masks compulsory, even outside, while students over 11 years old will have to cover their faces when returning to school next month. President Emmanuel Macron is trying to avoid another nationwide lockdown, but cautioned he couldn't entirely rule it out. That comes as the government plans to unveil another recovery package next Thursday, after the economy shrank by 14% during the second quarter.

<https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/france-tightens-mask-protocols-after-surge-in-virus-infections-1.1487079>

New Lockdown

Cuba imposes Havana lockdown as coronavirus spreads

Aggressive anti-virus measures including closing down air travel, have virtually eliminated COVID-19 in Cuba with the exception of Havana, where cases have surged from a handful a day to dozens daily over the last month. Starting on Tuesday, Havana was placed under a 7pm to 5am curfew. Most stores are barred from selling to shoppers from outside the immediate neighbourhood in order

to discourage people from moving around the city. Some Havana residents complained that the measures were complicating the already difficult task of buying food in a city stricken by constant shortages and long lines for a limited supply of basic goods.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/09/cuba-imposes-havana-lockdown-coronavirus-spreads-200901194133796.html>

WHO warns hospitals to brace for surge in coronavirus patients this autumn

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned European hospitals they should be braced for a surge in Covid-19 patient numbers this autumn. Hans Kluge, WHO Europe regional director, said a potential increase in Covid-19 cases will be down to a host of factors, including flu season and children returning to school. He urged governments across the continent to use local lockdowns to target small outbreaks of the virus as winter approaches.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/health/european-hospitals-prepare-coronavirus-surge-autumn-a4537036.html>

Coronavirus: South Korea returns to lockdown and pleads with citizens to adhere to social distancing guidelines

South Korea has implemented a second nationwide lockdown to fend off a new wave of coronavirus and pleaded with its citizens to again adhere to social distancing rules. "Government officials and administrative orders alone cannot stop the daily activities of citizens," said Jung Eun-kyeong, director of the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in a statement on Sunday. "We urge the public to practice complete social distancing over the next week."

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/coronavirus-south-korea-returns-to-lockdown-and-pleads-with-citizens-to-adhere-to-social-distancing-guidelines/ar-BB18yySu>