

# COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

## 22nd Feb 2021

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### News Highlights

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#### **Pfizer vaccine a shot in the arm for reducing sickness**

Israeli data shows promising results in reducing sickness due to COVID-19 through the use of the Pfizer.BioNTech vaccine. [The country's health ministry said both doses of the vaccine reduced sickness from COVID-19 by 95.8%](#). In reducing hospitalisations and death, the vaccine is 98.9% effective the ministry has said. Israel has made global headlines with its rapid vaccination campaign. It expects to have inoculated 95% of those aged fifty and over in the next two weeks.

#### **Assessing Sweden's COVID-19 approach**

The Swedish government's approach to tackling COVID-19, compared to most other countries, has been novel. [The country initially eschewed mask mandates and lockdown measures, but has since taken more robust measures such as limiting public gatherings and restricting alcohol sales following a vicious second wave.](#) Experts fear a third wave could be coming. The country's infection toll is roughly the same as the European average, though it has endured a higher death toll than its Scaninavian counterparts.

#### **G7 countries issue pledge to scale up vaccine access as global rollout hits 200 million**

Worldwide, [more than 200 million vaccines have been administered against COVID-19](#) (although the figure is likely to be an underestimate due to a lack of data from China and Russia). G7 countries account for 45% of inoculations to date, as concern grows over under-vaccination in developing countries. [G7 leaders pledged 'equitable' access to vaccines during last week's summit](#); French president Emmanuel Macron has suggested wealthier countries share up to five percent of their vaccine supply.

#### **South Korea to commence vaccinations with AstraZeneca, Pfizer vaccines**

Inoculations in South Korea are to begin with AstraZeneca's vaccine candidate on February 26th, followed by Pfizer being administered the following day. [The country has inked deals with other drugmakers including: Johnson & Johnson, Moderna and Novavax, as well as COVAX, to secure 79 million vaccine doses.](#) It aims to vaccinate ten million high-risk people by July and reach the herd immunity threshold by November - a target considered implausible, at the moment, by local experts.

### Lockdown Exit

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#### **South Korea to begin using Pfizer coronavirus vaccines on Feb. 27, PM says**

South Korea will begin administering the first of 117,000 doses of Pfizer's coronavirus vaccine on Feb. 27, a day after the country begins its first vaccinations with AstraZeneca's products, the prime minister announced on Sunday. Plans call for about 10 million high-risk people, including health care workers and staffers and some residents of assisted care facilities and nursing homes, to be inoculated by July. The first AstraZeneca vaccines are scheduled to be administered on Friday, with Pfizer's shots being deployed the next day, Prime Minister Chung Sye-kyun said <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-southkorea/south-korea-to-begin-using-pfizer-coronavirus-vaccines-on-feb-27-pm-says-idUSKBN2AL05J>

### **Scott Morrison reveals who his priorities for the coronavirus vaccine are**

Scott Morrison has revealed who his priorities are for the Covid vaccine, after being one of the first people in Australia to receive the jab. The prime minister said the 'average Joes and Jills' who work in aged care and hotel quarantine will come first. 'There are many average Joes and Jills who work in aged care and disability care and who have disabilities and live in aged care facilities or who do hotel quarantine - they are the priorities,' he said.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9283133/Scott-Morrison-reveals-priorities-coronavirus-vaccine-are.html>

### **Covid-19 vaccinations begin in Australia with Scott Morrison among first group**

The Australian prime minister, Scott Morrison, has received the Pfizer vaccine, as he joined a small first group to be vaccinated against Covid-19 on Sunday - a step the government says is intended to build public confidence in the safety of the vaccines. Morrison - the 12th member of the group to receive the vaccine at a televised event in Sydney - described it as a "curtain raiser" for the formal start of the vaccine rollout on Monday. He said the initial jabs were designed to show "that it's safe, that it's important, and we need to start with those who are most vulnerable and on the front line".

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/feb/21/covid-19-vaccinations-begin-in-australia-with-scott-morrison-among-first-group>

### **How is Sweden coping with Covid-19? The hands-off strategy hasn't changed, officials insist**

Now, in the short, gloomy days of February, Sweden's laissez-faire approach has changed. The government has overruled the public health agency, which has primacy in deciding how to tackle the pandemic, in a number of areas. Commuters are advised to wear masks at rush hour, and bars stop serving alcohol at 10pm. Gatherings of more than eight people are banned. While the restrictions are still not as tight as in the UK, perhaps the biggest change is in the public's perception of the pandemic. Trust in the authorities has dipped: according to a poll published last month only half of Swedes think that the public health agency is doing a good job, compared with 70 per cent last spring. Other agencies have fared far worse - with trust plunging to record lows. A year after the pandemic came to Sweden, more than 12,500 people have died of Covid-19 in a country of 10.2 million. In Norway, Denmark and Finland - which have a total population of 16.5 million - there have been 3,600 deaths.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/how-is-sweden-coping-with-covid-19-the-hands-off-strategy-hasnt-changed-officials-insist-bzvhfsckg>

### **COVID sickness dropped 95.8% after both Pfizer shots: Israeli Health Ministry**

The risk of illness from COVID-19 dropped 95.8% among people who received both shots of Pfizer's vaccine, Israel's Health Ministry said. The vaccine was also 98% effective in preventing fever or breathing problems and 98.9% effective in preventing hospitalizations and death, the ministry said. The findings were based on data collected nationally through Feb. 13 from Israelis who had received their second shot at least two weeks previously. Previous reports from individual health care providers also showed positive results, spurring Israel to remove restrictions on the economy after weeks of lockdown. On Sunday, schools and many stores will be allowed to reopen.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-israel-vaccine/covid-sickness-dropped-95-8-after-both-pfizer-shots-israeli-health-ministry-idUSKBN2AK0NC>

### **G-7 vows 'equitable' world vaccine access, but details scant**

Leaders of the Group of Seven economic powers promised Friday to immunize the world's neediest people against the coronavirus by giving money, and precious vaccine doses, to a U.N.-backed vaccine distribution effort. But the leaders, under pressure over their vaccination campaigns at home, were unwilling to say exactly how much vaccine they were willing to share with the developing world, or when. Chancellor Angela Merkel said after the G-7 leaders held a virtual

meeting that fair distribution of vaccines was “an elementary question of fairness.” But she added, “No vaccination appointment in Germany is going to be endangered.”

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-france-london-boris-johnson-europe-7313ccb3ec3945a1f5e959f9253171f7>

### **Victorian family tests positive to Covid a day after state emerges from lockdown**

Three members of a Victorian family, two of whom quarantined at the Melbourne airport Holiday Inn, have tested positive to coronavirus a day after the state’s five-day lockdown was lifted. Health authorities were confident the new cases, which came after two days of zero cases in Victoria, will not spark further infections as they were isolating at home during their infectious period. The health minister, Martin Foley, said the cases involved two parents and a child, two of whom were classified as primary close contacts because they had been in quarantine on the third floor of the quarantine hotel at Tullamarine. The other family member was deemed a secondary contact. Foley said the trio had multiple negative tests between 10 February and 12 February after returning from overseas in early February.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/feb/19/victorian-family-tests-positive-to-covid-a-day-after-state-emerges-from-lockdown>

### **Australia's travel bubble with New Zealand to restart as Victoria records no new Covid cases**

Australia’s coronavirus travel bubble with New Zealand will recommence on Sunday, the Department of Health has announced. In a statement issued on Saturday afternoon, the department said “green zone” flights from New Zealand could resume at 12.01am on Sunday, subject to some conditions. “The AHPPC monitors the situation in many locations and will continue to advise on a range of decisions in the interest of the health of all Australians,” said the chief medical officer, Prof Paul Kelly. “These decisions are not easy and we do not take them lightly – and all AHPPC members appreciate the ongoing patience and flexibility of Australians and New Zealanders, including those in the tourism and travel industry.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/feb/20/victoria-records-zero-new-coronavirus-cases-as-melbourne-case-moved-to-icu>

### **After snap lockdown, New Zealand begins vaccine programme**

A few days after Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern ended the snap lockdown in Auckland, New Zealand has launched its first COVID-19 vaccination programme. The country is using Pfizer-BioNtech's vaccine against the deadly coronavirus. On Saturday, a small group of medical professionals were injected with the approved vaccine in Auckland. Following this, border staff and so-called Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) workers will initiate a bigger and wider rollout of the vaccine.

<https://www.wionews.com/world/after-snap-lockdown-new-zealand-begins-vaccine-programme-364999>

### **Escaping lockdown: when will life return to normal?**

Governments and societies will have to learn how to manage a complex series of risks, both in the short term while only part of the population has been vaccinated, and in the long term as the disease lingers even after most people have received the jab. International travel could face restrictions for some time to come. Some scientists describe a long drawn-out battle with an endemic virus that constantly evolves — with new vaccines and treatments being deployed in a way that they hope will allow much but not all of normal life to return. “The challenge is to find a way to live with it without keeping huge restrictions in place,” says Azra Ghani, professor of infectious disease epidemiology at Imperial College London.

<https://www.ft.com/content/f27fab49-0a63-467a-a740-0c94f7be54b3>

### **Covid-19: Which countries in Africa are administering vaccines?**

Africa has now recorded more than 100,000 deaths from coronavirus, and there's been concern over

the delay in rolling out Covid-19 vaccinations there. There has been global competition to get hold of vaccines, and African countries have generally not been as successful as richer countries in securing supplies. "It is deeply unjust that the most vulnerable Africans are forced to wait for vaccines while lower-risk groups in rich countries are made safe," says Matshidiso Moeti, the World Health Organization regional director for Africa. France President Emmanuel Macron has proposed that rich countries in Europe and the US share their vaccines with Africa.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/56100076>

### **New G7 support gives COVAX program a shot in the arm**

COVAX, the push to equitably distribute COVID-19 vaccine throughout the world, got a major boost with a fresh infusion of pledges, as G7 leaders gathered virtually at a security conference. In other international developments, Johnson & Johnson submitted its COVID-19 vaccine for World Health Organization (WHO) assessment, and two researchers published more promising findings for already listed vaccines, AstraZeneca-Oxford and Pfizer-BioNTech.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/02/new-g7-support-gives-covax-program-shot-arm>

## **Exit Strategies**

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### **Covid-19: Health chiefs say NI vaccine programme on target**

Northern Ireland's Covid-19 vaccine programme is "ahead of schedule," health officials have said, after Boris Johnson announced new UK-wide targets. Earlier, the prime minister said all UK adults should be offered a first dose of vaccine by the end of July. The previous target was September for first dose completion, but the PM has now said it should "go further and faster" to help ease lockdown rules. Stormont's Department of Health said its plans were dependent on supply.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-56146314>

### **U.K. to 'Cautiously' Ease Lockdown Despite Vaccine Push: Hancock**

The U.K. government will take a "cautious" approach to easing lockdown, with restrictions lifted every few weeks to judge the impact, despite a significant acceleration of its Covid-19 vaccination program, a senior minister said. Health Secretary Matt Hancock urged people to keep following the rules even when vaccinated, after the government announced that all adults will be offered a shot by the end of July and everyone over 50 by mid-April. Prime Minister Boris Johnson will hold a meeting with his senior ministers on Sunday to sign off on plans for how to ease England's lockdown, ahead of a statement to Parliament on Monday

[https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/u-k-to-cautiously-ease-lockdown-despite-vaccine-push-hancock/ar-BB1dRdMh?tblci=GiBudnqOGGoAPRbpbYy2VqSk0eh2h\\_uK6539mla5isdiUxyCC-00](https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/u-k-to-cautiously-ease-lockdown-despite-vaccine-push-hancock/ar-BB1dRdMh?tblci=GiBudnqOGGoAPRbpbYy2VqSk0eh2h_uK6539mla5isdiUxyCC-00)

### **Britain to offer all adults a COVID-19 vaccine by end of July**

All adults in Britain will be offered a first shot of a COVID-19 vaccine by the end of July, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Saturday ahead of a planned announcement on the cautious reopening of the economy from lockdown. Johnson will set out a roadmap to ease England's third national lockdown on Monday, having met a target to vaccinate 15 million Britons from higher-risk categories by mid-February. Britain now aims to give a first dose to all over-50s by April 15, the government said, having previously indicated it wished them to receive the shot by May.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-britain/britain-to-offer-all-adults-a-covid-19-vaccine-by-end-of-july-idUSL8N2KQ0J9>

### **Green Pass: Israel's Covid-19 vaccination certificate opens fast track to normal life**

People with the so-called "Green Pass" will get access to gyms, hotels and theatres, as more than 46 percent of its 9 million population get vaccinated.

[https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/green-pass-israel-s-covid-19-vaccination-certificate-opens-fast-n1258467?cid=sm\\_npd\\_nn\\_tw\\_ma](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/green-pass-israel-s-covid-19-vaccination-certificate-opens-fast-n1258467?cid=sm_npd_nn_tw_ma)

### **Over 200 million coronavirus vaccines administered worldwide**

Thus far, 92% of doses have been administered in high-income countries or the wealthiest of countries placed by the World Bank in the medium-development bracket. Together, they account for a mere 53% of the world's population. Among the 29 least developed countries, only Guinea and Rwanda have begun to vaccinate their people.

<https://www.brusselstimes.com/news/belgium-all-news/health/155951/coronavirus-vaccines-over-200-million-doses-administered-worldwide/>

### **Biden administration, vaccine makers scramble to outflank coronavirus variants**

If vaccines need to be switched, when should companies and government officials pull the trigger? Drug companies already have started working on updating their vaccines against new, more transmissible variants — a move encouraged by government officials. “What we are saying is, ‘Go ahead and study them, get them ready to go,’” said a health official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the message conveyed to manufacturers. “You do a construct for the 351 variant [first detected in South Africa], test it in people and get all the information. If you need it a few months from now, you have it. You essentially hold them in the freezer” until needed. While the current shots by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna use a new technology that allows for speedy modifications, changing vaccines adds wrinkles to manufacturing and distribution schemes that are already complex.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/02/19/vaccine-updates-coronavirus-variants/>

### **Gen V: The Young Vaccine Heroes Convincing Their Elders To Get The Covid Jab**

Neesie has recruited 20 young people aged between 18 and 25 who are from Black, Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi backgrounds, and teamed up with Bradford's university and hospital to teach them about Covid and arm them with facts about the vaccine. The plan was for the young people to go out into their communities to spread awareness – but, due to the lockdown, they are speaking to community groups through online platforms to eradicate myths and misconceptions. Someone who looks like you and speaks the same language and has the same cultural or faith background as you is often better at relaying the message and being trusted

[https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/covid-vaccine-hesitancy-bame\\_uk\\_602e924fc5b673b19b66c7ac](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/covid-vaccine-hesitancy-bame_uk_602e924fc5b673b19b66c7ac)

### **Mayor Lori Lightfoot Provides Update On Chicago's Coronavirus Vaccine Rollout**

NPR's Scott Simon asks Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot about vaccination efforts in Chicago and other issues.

<https://www.npr.org/2021/02/20/969703439/mayor-lori-lightfoot-provides-update-on-chicagos-coronavirus-vaccine-rollout>

### **Short of Vaccine, States Find Hidden Stashes in Their Own Backyards**

In the U.S. millions of doses of coronavirus vaccine were still sitting in freezers, allocated in excess to nursing homes or stockpiled for later use. Now states are claiming them. Virginia took the lead negotiating the release of stored second doses. It is now seeing leading the way in delivering COVID-19 shots.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/19/us/coronavirus-vaccines.html>

### **Covid vaccines: Boris Johnson pledges surplus to poorer countries at G7**

Boris Johnson is pledging to donate most of the UK's surplus vaccine supply to poorer countries in a speech to a virtual G7 meeting on Friday. He urged rich countries to back a 100-day target for the developing new vaccines for future emerging diseases. The UK has ordered more than 400 million doses of various vaccines, so many will be left over once all adults are vaccinated. But anti-poverty campaigners say the UK is not doing enough. Decisions on when and how much of the surplus will be distributed will be made later this year, with ministers taking into account the supply chain and whether booster shots are needed in the autumn.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-56117120>

### **How To Register For The Coronavirus Vaccine In Your State**

The process to sign up for COVID-19 vaccines varies by place so NPR created a tool to help you understand how things work in your state and connect you with local resources.

<https://www.npr.org/2021/02/20/969703383/how-to-register-for-the-coronavirus-vaccine-in-your-state>

### **Biden's First Month of Covid-19 Response Marked by Larger Federal Role**

In his first month in office, President Biden has positioned the federal government squarely at the front of the battle against Covid-19, tapping the military to staff mass-vaccination centers, joining with state and local officials to accelerate the pace of vaccinations, and requiring masks on buses, planes and federal property. But Mr. Biden's efforts to use his bully pulpit to pressure states to take actions the federal government doesn't control—such as keeping mask mandates in place—have had mixed results, and many school districts across the country are still grappling with how and when to return to in-person instruction.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/bidens-first-month-of-covid-19-response-marked-by-larger-federal-role-11613840400>

### **What's safe after COVID-19 vaccination? Don't shed masks yet**

It's great if the vaccine means someone who otherwise would have been hospitalized instead just has the sniffles, or even no symptoms. But "the looming question," Fauci said during a White House coronavirus response briefing last week, is whether a person infected despite vaccination can still, unwittingly, infect someone else. Studies are underway to find out, and hints are starting to emerge. Fauci pointed to recent research from Spain showing the more coronavirus an infected person harbors — what's called the viral load — the more infectious they are. That's not surprising, as it's true with other illnesses.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/whats-safe-after-covid19-vaccination-dont-shed-masks-yet-anthony-fauci-vaccination-masks-mask-woman-b1805045.html>

### **Florida Governor Ron DeSantis faces criticism over COVID-19 vaccine distribution**

In Manatee County, Florida, this week, thousands of people got called to come to the affluent Lakewood Ranch development and get a coronavirus vaccine. It was a call many had been waiting for. "We were very fortunate, we got the call, we came right down," one woman told CBS News' Jim Axelrod. It was more than good fortune. Those who received the call all lived in two specific zip codes. Their doses came through a deal struck by Florida's Republican Governor Ron DeSantis and the CEO of Lakewood Ranch's parent company, owned by major Republican donors. Manatee County Commissioner Misty Servia said in a county meeting that the deal bypassed county protocol, allowing a select group of residents to go the front of the vaccine line. "So rather than this randomized pool where everybody gets a fair shake, these two zip codes were going to receive preferential treatment," she said.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/florida-governor-ron-desantis-covid-19-vaccine-distribution/>

### **COVID-19: Sadiq Khan urges BAME communities to get vaccine after he receives jab**

Sadiq Khan has received his first dose of a coronavirus vaccine and urged members of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities to follow suit, declaring: "I wouldn't be taking the jab if I didn't think it was safe." The London mayor received a COVID-19 jab on Friday morning at a vaccine centre located inside a church in southwest London.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-sadiq-khan-urges-bame-communities-to-get-vaccine-after-he-receives-jab-1222572>

### **UK Government needs to donate surplus Covid-19 vaccines now, warns WTO**

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) has urged the UK Government to start donating Covid-19 vaccines across the world now. The head of the WTO said there should be no delay in sending the

surplus coronavirus vaccines to developing countries. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala urged the Government to act now as it is “in the interest” of rich countries as well as poor countries to have “equitable access”. Prime Minister Boris Johnson pledged to donate the majority of the UK’s surplus vaccines to poorer nations in the lead-up to Friday’s virtual G7 meeting

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/uk-government-needs-donate-surplus-19879486>

### **Covid-19: California’s Governor Reserves Vaccines for Teachers**

Under pressure to reopen classrooms in California, Gov. Gavin Newsom said on Friday that, starting March 1, the state will reserve 10 percent of its first doses of Covid-19 vaccines for teachers and school employees. Noting that the federal government has been steadily increasing the state’s vaccine allotment, the governor said he would set aside 75,000 doses each week for teachers and staff planning to return to public school campuses in person. Although California prioritizes teachers for the vaccine, supply has been an issue. Only about three dozen of the state’s 58 counties have had enough doses on hand to immunize those who work at public schools.

<https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/02/19/world/covid-19-coronavirus>

### **Here are the four steps needed to safely end the UK's Covid lockdown**

Our first collective aim should be reducing transmission to as low a level as possible – and keeping it low. Secondly, it will be crucial that we continue to monitor transmission and quickly identify any new variants. The third important aspect of this roadmap should be a highly effective test, trace, isolate and support system. As cases fall and people begin to mix again, keeping the virus under control will depend upon the effectiveness of this system. Councils and communities must work together to ensure those who are least likely to take up the offer of a vaccination are engaged and supported, whether through targeted, culturally aware communication campaigns or enlisting community representatives to encourage uptake. Local community leaders, businesses, faith groups, libraries, schools, sports clubs and local media will all be central to these efforts.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/feb/19/safely-end-uk-covid-lockdown-pandemic>

### **COVID: Schools and outdoor mixing could be first areas where lockdown will be eased**

The prime minister is still aiming to reopen all schools in England next month despite concerns from teachers and scientists. Ahead of an announcement about easing coronavirus lockdown on Monday, Downing Street refused to be drawn on specific reports that more extensive outdoor socialising could be allowed by Easter, including suggestions that two households will be allowed to meet outside. Schools and outdoor mixing are likely to be the first areas where rules will be relaxed.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-schools-and-outdoor-mixing-could-be-first-areas-where-lockdown-will-be-eased-12223521>

### **UK Covid lockdown easing: A No 10 'priority' is to allow more social contact**

Reuniting families and allowing people to have more social contact will be an “absolute priority” in easing lockdown after schools reopen, No 10 says. Options being considered include allowing two households to mix outdoors in the coming weeks. It comes after confirmation that care home residents in England will each be allowed one regular visitor from 8 March. The full plan for England's lockdown easing is due to be set out on Monday.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-55931181>

### **Germany must ease lockdown measures with caution - health minister**

Falling coronavirus infections and a steady rise in vaccinations mean lifting lockdown measures in Germany is possible, Health Minister Jens Spahn said on Friday, urging caution given that a more infectious variant had been identified. “There are rising demands to end the lockdown and this is possible but we need to be careful in order not to jeopardize our achievements,” Spahn told a news conference.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-germany-spahn-idUSL8N2KP2QW>

## **How are England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland planning to lift lockdown restrictions?**

The whole of the UK is currently under lockdown in a bid to limit the spread of Covid-19 and therefore reduce the burden on NHS hospitals and staff. But each of the devolved nations is following slightly different rules tailored to suit their own circumstances and differing levels of infection. Prime minister Boris Johnson will unveil his "roadmap" out of England's lockdown in an announcement scheduled for 22 February. So how do England's lockdown rules compare with those in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and how is each nation planning to lift restrictions?

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/uk-lockdowns-england-scotland-wales-northern-ireland-b1804828.html>

## **Zimbabwean president urges all Zimbabweans to be vaccinated against COVID-19, thanking China for its generosity**

Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa on Saturday urged all Zimbabweans to be vaccinated against COVID-19, saying that this was the only way to conquer the pandemic. Addressing mourners at the burial of national hero Moses Mpofu at the National Heroes Acre, Mnangagwa said the vaccines which Zimbabwe had received from China earlier during the week were safe and an effective antidote against COVID-19. Vaccinations, however, remain voluntary.

<http://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202102/20/WS60310973a31024ad0baa9f37.html>

## **Pub and travel bosses demand plan for easing lockdown in England**

Pub and travel bosses have demanded that the prime minister produce a detailed roadmap for easing lockdown restrictions in England, amid mounting friction between the government and business leaders. Ahead of an update on the government's plans, due on Monday, increasingly irate pub executives urged Boris Johnson to mend fences with the industry by offering clarity about the way forward. Separately, in a letter to the prime minister, the travel industry warned "we cannot wait for the full rollout of the vaccination programme before people start to travel again".

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/feb/20/pub-travel-lockdown-easing-plan-england>

## **Hold my hand: English care home visits allowed from March 8**

Care home residents in England will be allowed one regular visitor from March 8, the government said, as it starts to ease COVID-19 lockdown measures, underpinned by the rollout of vaccines to older and clinically vulnerable people. Older people living in care homes have been offered the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine as part of a programme that has seen almost 17 million shots given to date.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-carehomes/hold-my-hand-english-care-home-visits-allowed-from-march-8-idUSKBN2AK003>

## **UK to allow outdoor two-household gatherings by Easter: The Telegraph**

Britain will allow outdoor two-household gatherings by Easter under lockdown exit plan to be revealed by Boris Johnson, the Telegraph reported here on Friday. However, social distancing rules that people should keep two metres apart when outside are likely to remain in place for "months", the report added. The news came after the UK announced on Friday that the number of new COVID-19 infections in Britain is shrinking by 3% to 6% each day, faster than last week, adding that the closely watched reproduction "R" number might be slightly lower too.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-britain-lockdown/uk-to-allow-outdoor-two-household-gatherings-by-easter-the-telegraph-idUSL1N2KP2TB>

## **Spain's regions move to ease coronavirus restrictions despite high contagion rates**

Speaking on Thursday evening to present the latest data, Fernando Simón, the director of the Health Ministry's Coordination Center for Health Alerts (CCAES), called on citizens not to drop their guard, but some of the country's regions have already started to roll back their social restrictions. Since

yesterday, the Madrid region has changed its curfew time from 10pm to 11pm, and is allowing bars and restaurants to stay open until the same time (until Thursday they had to close at 9pm). Castilla y León, for its part, will be lifting the perimetral lockdown of some of its provinces, while Aragón will be suspending the confinement of the cities of Zaragoza and Calatayud.

<https://english.elpais.com/society/2021-02-19/spains-regions-move-to-ease-coronavirus-restrictions-despite-high-contagion-rates.html>

## **Partisan Exits**

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### **Anti-coronavirus vaccine protests held in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth**

In Australia, a number of small rallies have been held in capital cities across the country in protest of the coronavirus vaccine. Gatherings were held in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Perth on Saturday with a few hundred people at each. In Victoria, where the state has just emerged from a snap five-day lockdown, pepper spray was deployed and a number of arrests were reportedly made.

<https://www.9news.com.au/national/coronavirus-protest-melbourne-brisbane-sydney-pete-evans/a328629b-4d7f-48b1-a13f-72fe42dd8c2b>

### **Amsterdam police clear square of anti-lockdown demonstrators**

Police in Amsterdam forcibly cleared anti-lockdown demonstrators from the city's Museum Square on Sunday after they ignored instructions to leave amid a ban on public gatherings due to the coronavirus epidemic. The Museum Square has become a regular meeting place for people opposed to social distancing and other lockdown rules. At Sunday's demonstration, some were carrying signs saying "freedom" or held yellow umbrellas, but others appeared simply to have joined the throng of several hundred mostly young people. Police conducted raids on horseback and a handful of protesters were detained.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/amsterdam-police-clear-square-of-anti-lockdown-demonstrators/ar-BB1dSJHA>

### **Reporters - Covid-19: The Swedish exception?**

With the arrival of winter, the threat from Covid-19 increased, requiring a change in strategy: the Swedish government limited public gatherings but allowed shops to remain open. Our reporters have been to Sweden, but also to Finland and Denmark, to meet the Swedes who have left their country out of fear of catching coronavirus. Although Sweden's Covid-19 figures are no worse than the European average, the country has reported 10 times more deaths than its Scandinavian neighbours.

<https://www.france24.com/en/tv-shows/reporters/20210219-covid-19-the-swedish-exception>

### **Victorian gym owner charged for running gym during lockdown**

A Victorian gym owner who defied the state's five-day "circuit-breaker" lockdown by keeping his premises operating has been charged by police. The 50-year-old St Albans man was arrested on February 16 by police for operating his gym in Campbellfield in lockdown. Officers today confirmed he was charged with failing to comply with Chief Health Officer directions and was granted bail.

<https://www.9news.com.au/national/victorian-gym-owner-charged-after-opening-during-lockdown/7fc2659a-d45f-4ba0-81ad-71359894302c>

## **Continued Lockdown**

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### **Toronto's lockdown extended until at least March 8**

A lockdown and stay at home order is being extended in Canada's largest city until at least March 8. The shutdown in Toronto began on Nov 23 after a second novel coronavirus wave hit the province. Ontario Health Minister Christine Elliott said it was a difficult but necessary decision. Dr. Eileen de Villa, Toronto's medical officer of health, asked the provincial government this week to extend the lockdown, saying she has never been more worried about the future because of new coronavirus variants.

<https://japantoday.com/category/world/toronto's-lockdown-extended-until-at-least-march-8>

### **City residents vent frustration after spending over 40 days in lockdown**

Gaocheng, a district of the Hebei capital Shijiazhuang, went into lockdown in early January after a spike in cases. Many complain that they are still unable to leave their houses despite a fall in cases and an easing of restrictions earlier this month

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3122508/coronavirus-china-city-residents-vent-frustration-after-spending>

### **Scientific Viewpoint**

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### **Pfizer vaccine 'highly effective' in reducing coronavirus transmission, study suggests**

New data from Israel suggests vaccine is 89.4 per cent effective at preventing infections, whether symptomatic or not

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/covid-vaccine-pfizer-israel-transmission-latest-b1805313.html>

### **Continent's medics boycott Oxford jab as Europe talks down efficacy**

Europe's faltering immunisation programme has been hit by a boycott of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine by medical staff concerned about its side effects and doubtful of its efficacy against new variants of Covid-19. Health workers in France and elsewhere in the EU are declining the Anglo-Swedish vaccine, increasingly portrayed in European media as a cheap and inferior alternative to the mRNA jabs made by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/continent-s-medics-boycott-oxford-jab-as-europe-talks-down-efficacy-kjtkxcvs0>

### **Pfizer-BioNTech Shot Stops Covid Spread, Israeli Study Shows**

The Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech SE Covid-19 vaccine appeared to stop the vast majority of recipients in Israel becoming infected, providing the first real-world indication that the immunization will curb transmission of the coronavirus. The vaccine, which was rolled out in a national immunization program that began Dec. 20, was 89.4% effective at preventing laboratory-confirmed infections, according to a copy of a draft publication that was posted on Twitter and confirmed by a person familiar with the work. The companies and Israel's Health Ministry worked together on the preliminary observational analysis, which has not yet been peer-reviewed.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-02-21/pfizer-biontech-shot-stops-covid-s-spread-israeli-study-shows>

### **The ticket to a return of clubs, gigs and football matches? Five-minute coronavirus test made in the UK is touted as 'game-changer' in unlocking live events**

Yorkshire firm Avacta have developed a new super-fast lateral flow Covid test Understood to be in last test stage at Government top-secret Porton Down lab The test's developers say it is more accurate and faster than the US devices It is hoped that 5-minute rapid testing will be used on admission to large events

[https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9281337/Five-minute-coronavirus-test-UK-touted-game-changer-unlocking-live-events.html?ito=social-twitter\\_dailymailUK](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9281337/Five-minute-coronavirus-test-UK-touted-game-changer-unlocking-live-events.html?ito=social-twitter_dailymailUK)

### **Sage expert calls for children to get Covid jab as schools set to reopen**

Pressure is mounting on the government to prove it is safe for children to return to the classroom before it reopens schools, as one of the UK government's scientific advisers warned that the plan could lead to a resurgence of coronavirus. In a last-minute plea before Boris Johnson announces on Monday details of plans to reopen schools in England on 8 March, unions, experts and some opposition MPs, have demanded the publication of scientific evidence informing the government's decision.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/feb/21/sage-expert-calls-children-to-get-covid-jab-as-schools-set-to-reopen>

### **The inside story of how the Oxford vaccine was made and the team behind it**

How an email to a scientist in her pyjamas began an astonishing story — the creation of a groundbreaking vaccine in less than 12 months. Over the past year Andrew Pollard, director of the Oxford Vaccine Group, has been tackling a daunting mission: to develop a life-saving vaccine against Covid-19. It involved “logistics, teamwork and resilience”, he says. Approval of the vaccine for use in the UK, which was granted on December 30, was in some ways the summit denied him on Everest in 1994 when he was part of the group that just fell short.

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/how-oxford-astrazeneca-vaccine-was-made-vxbzg9929>

### **Pfizer, Moderna vaccines have reduced effectiveness against South African variant, studies show**

President Biden hesitated in giving a specific timeline for when every American will be able to get a vaccine and when the country will be able to return to normalcy. During a visit to the Pfizer vaccine manufacturing facility in Michigan on Friday, the president said he wanted to be “straight” with the American people and explained that issues such as weather events, emerging virus mutations and manufacturing delays could pose significant challenges to the vaccination process.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/02/19/coronavirus-covid-live-updates-us/>

### **Pfizer and BioNTech Coronavirus Vaccine Effective After 1 Dose, Can Last 2 Weeks in Standard Freezer, Separate Research Shows**

On Friday, Pfizer and BioNTech announced that they have submitted new data about their BNT162b2 vaccine to the Food and Drug Administration. With this submission, the two companies hope that the FDA will update the emergency use authorization (EUA) it has granted the vaccine. The new data indicates that Pfizer and BioNTech's BNT162b2 can be kept for as long as two weeks at temperatures common to pharmaceutical freezers and refrigerators, as opposed to the constant ultra-low temperature storage it initially seemed to necessitate.

<https://www.fool.com/investing/2021/02/19/pfizer-and-biontech-coronavirus-vaccine-effective/>

### **Russia approves 3rd coronavirus vaccine before late-stage trials begin, PM says**

Russia on Saturday approved a third coronavirus vaccine for domestic use, Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said on state TV, though large-scale clinical trials of the shot, labeled CoviVac and produced by the Chumakov Centre, have yet to begin. Russia has already approved two COVID-19 vaccines, including the Sputnik V shot, developed by Moscow's Gamaleya Institute, following a similar approach of granting approval before seeing any late-stage trial results.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/7652377/russia-3rd-coronavirus-vaccine/>

### **How Google search data can predict COVID-19 outbreaks**

New research finds that online searches can accurately predict regional increases and decreases in COVID-19 cases. Certain types of searches reveal the activities in which people plan to engage. The search volume for outside-the-home vs. stay-at-home activities forecasts the number of COVID-19 diagnoses 10–14 days later.

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/how-google-search-data-can-predict-covid-19-outbreaks>

### **Association between mental illness and COVID-19 in South Korea**

In their nationwide cohort study, Seung Won Lee and colleagues suggest that patients with a severe mental illness had a slightly higher risk for severe clinical outcomes of COVID-19. Although the authors classified region of residence into urban and rural categories to adjust for potential confounding, the high number of COVID-19 cases in Daegu (the fourth most populous city in South Korea) indicates that bias could remain due to uncontrolled confounding as a result of regional differences.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366\(20\)30465-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366(20)30465-X/fulltext)

### **Italian doctors remember night that ushered in Europe's first COVID-19 lockdown**

A year ago, Laura Ricevuti and Annalisa Malara, both doctors at Codogno hospital in Italy, had a hunch that something was different about a patient in the intensive care ward. Their decision to take matters into their own hands wound up triggering a national emergency - they had identified the first case of COVID-19 in the area that would become Europe's first lockdown zone. A previously healthy 38-year-old man, now known as Mattia, his first name, or "patient one", had gone to the hospital with a high fever, cough and shortness of breath on Feb. 18, 2020. He refused to be admitted so was given antibiotics and went home.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-italy-first-doctors/italian-doctors-remember-night-that-ushered-in-europes-first-covid-19-lockdown-idUSL8N2KP4Q3>

### **Elon Musk Got 4,000 SpaceX Workers to Join a Covid-19 Study. Here's What He Learned.**

To monitor the prevalence of the virus among SpaceX workers nationwide, Mr. Musk and the rocket company's top medical executive worked with doctors and academic researchers to build an antibody-testing program. More than 4,000 SpaceX workers volunteered for monthly blood tests. This week the group published its findings, which suggest that a certain threshold of antibodies might provide people lasting protection against the virus. Mr. Musk is listed as a co-author of the peer-reviewed study, which appears in the journal Nature Communications. "People can have antibodies, but it doesn't mean they are going to be immune" to Covid-19, said Galit Alter, a co-author of the study who is a member of the Ragon Institute of MGH, MIT and Harvard. Individuals who experienced fewer, milder Covid-19 symptoms generated fewer antibodies and were therefore less likely to meet the threshold for longer-term immunity, the study found.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/elon-musk-got-4-000-spacex-workers-to-join-a-covid-19-study-heres-what-he-learned-11613826001>

### **Mental anguish in COVID-19 survivors, young US adults**

A research letter by Italian investigators published yesterday in JAMA Psychiatry details a study of 381 patients in Rome who had sought emergency care for COVID-19 and were given a psychiatric assessment 1 to 4 months after recovery, from Apr 21 to Oct 15, 2020. One-hundred-fifteen of 381 patients (30.2%) were diagnosed as having PTSD, while 17.3% had depression, 7.0% had generalized anxiety disorder, 0.7% were hypomanic, and 0.2% were psychotic. Women made up 55.7% of the PTSD diagnoses, and patients with PTSD reported higher rates of a history of psychiatric disorders (34.8%) and delirium or agitation when ill (16.5%) and the persistence of more than three coronavirus-related symptoms after recovery from infection (62.6%).

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/02/mental-anguish-covid-19-survivors-young-us-adults>

### **To get ahead of variants, Covid-19 drug makers use evolutionary biology as a guide**

Before becoming a Covid-19 drug, each candidate was just a tiny fragment of someone's immune system, part of a swarm of Y-shaped proteins unleashed to try to keep the coronavirus from invading more cells. If the person recovered, these antibodies might end up in a blood sample in a lab. Some proved more effective than others. Yet even as researchers pinpointed the best of the bunch as possible medications, they knew their power could wane: What worked against the coronavirus as it was last year could falter as the pathogen evolved.

<https://www.statnews.com/2021/02/19/to-get-ahead-of-variants-covid-19-drug-makers-use-evolutionary-biology-as-a-guide/>

## **Coronavirus Resurgence**

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### **UK records 215 coronavirus-related deaths and 9,834 new cases as infections plummet**

The UK recorded 215 coronavirus-related deaths and 9,834 new cases on Sunday as infections continue to plummet. This is a considerable drop from the peak of 1,820 deaths on January 1st. The figures have dropped significantly since last Sunday when the UK recorded 258 deaths and 10,972 infection, in a sure sign lockdown is working. A total of 17,582,121 have received at least one dose

of the vaccine and 615,148 have received their second dose. A third (33.4%) of the UK adult population has now been given the first dose of a Covid-19 vaccine.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/deaths-215-coronavirus-covid-9-834-cases-b920660.html>

### **Africa reaches 100,000 known COVID-19 deaths as danger grows**

Twenty-one countries in Africa now have case fatality rates that are higher than the global average, Nkengasong said, including Sudan, Egypt, Liberia, Mali and Zimbabwe. The case fatality rate continent-wide remains higher than the global average at 2.6%. "The second wave came with full might, partly because of this new variant (in South Africa), partly because we created superspreading opportunities" such as holiday parties, said Salim Abdool Karim, the top COVID-19 advisor to South Africa's government. "The virus adapts and gets better with time because it's mutating progressively to be better adapted."

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/africa-reaches-100000-known-covid19-deaths-as-danger-grows-south-africa-covid19-continent-oxygen-b1804478.html>

### **Tanzania's president admits country has COVID-19 problem**

Tanzania's president is finally acknowledging that his country has a coronavirus problem after claiming for months that the disease had been defeated by prayer. Populist President John Magufuli on Sunday urged citizens of the East African country to take precautions and even wear face masks — but only locally made ones. Over the course of the pandemic he has expressed wariness about foreign-made goods, including COVID-19 vaccines. The president's comments came days after the country of some 60 million people mourned the death of one of its highest-profile politicians, the vice president of the semi-autonomous island region of Zanzibar, whose political party had earlier said he had COVID-19. The president's chief secretary also died in recent days, though the cause was not revealed.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/tanzanias-president-admits-country-has-covid-19-problem/ar-BB1dSldK>

### **UK records 445 new deaths as more than 17 million Brits have received a coronavirus vaccine**

More than 17 million people in the UK have now received at least one dose of a coronavirus vaccine, new figures reveal. The UK reported 445 coronavirus-related deaths and 10,406 new infections on Saturday. However, London continues to lag behind other regions bar the South West. The NHS England data shows a total of 1,753,957 jabs were given to people in London between December 8 and February 19, including 1,687,471 first doses and 66,486 second doses.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/more-than-17-million-coronavirus-vaccine-uk-445-deaths-covid-b920610.html>

### **COVID-19 surge is now helping to create herd immunity**

"I don't want to provide a false sense of assurance here," said L.A. County chief science officer Dr. Paul Simon, who pointed out that 60% of Angelenos would remain vulnerable even if more than a third have already been infected with the coronavirus. "Unless they've had vaccination, they continue to be susceptible. I think we need to continue to be vigilant."

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-02-20/covid-19-pandemic-herd-immunity-vaccinations-plummeting-cases>

### **Covid-19: Number of coronavirus-related deaths falls for third week**

The weekly number of Covid-19 related deaths registered in Northern Ireland has fallen for a third week. The NI Statistics and Research Agency (Nisra) said the virus was mentioned on the death certificates of 99 people, in the week to Friday 12 February. That is 27 fewer than the previous week, bringing the agency's total to 2,673. The Department of Health's total for the same date, based on a positive test result being recorded, was 1,985.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-56123110>

## **COVID-19: More than 17 million people have received first jab - as deaths surpass 120,000**

More than 17 million people in the UK have now received their first dose of a coronavirus vaccine, while the number of deaths has surpassed 120,000. Another 445 people have died within 28 days of a positive COVID-19 test, according to the latest government figures, taking the total to 120,365. The deaths included a 16-year-old with no known underlying health conditions. Where patients were aged 16 to 100, all except four - aged between 16 and 68 - were known to have had underlying health conditions.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-more-than-17-million-people-have-received-first-jab-as-deaths-surpass-120-000-12223734>

## **Germany sees drop in virus cases flatten as variant surges**

The head of Germany's disease control agency is warning that the decline in new coronavirus cases the country had been seeing has leveled off and the share of cases involving more contagious variants is rising

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/germany-sees-drop-in-virus-cases-flatten-as-variant-surges-germany-cases-cases-decline-coronavirus-b1804612.html>

## **Germany, Once a Model, Is Swamped Like Everyone Else by Pandemic's Second Wave**

After winning widespread recognition for its handling of the coronavirus last year, Germany now finds itself struggling with its sluggish vaccine rollout and a frustrated population.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/20/world/europe/germany-coronavirus-second-wave.html>

## **Coronavirus: Infections in Germany stagnate at high level**

Amid repeated calls for the government to lift the lockdown, Spahn urged the public to remain cautious, adding that the coronavirus "doesn't just give up." "There are rising demands to end the lockdown and this is possible, but we need to be careful in order not to jeopardize our achievements," Spahn said on Friday. The RKI reported on Friday a slight drop in COVID-19 infections over seven days, with 56.8 cases per 100,000 inhabitants, compared to 57.1 the day before, according to the German Press Agency (DPA). Germany's federal government aims for a level of infections below 50. States can move towards easing the lockdown when the level remains under 35.

<https://www.dw.com/en/coronavirus-infections-in-germany-stagnate-at-high-level/a-56623074>

## **BMC seals 1,305 buildings as Covid-19 cases surge in Mumbai**

Two days after the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) made the norms for locking down buildings in the city again civic data shows the number of buildings locked down stands at 1,035. Sealed floors being linked to a rise in COVID-19 cases

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/bmc-seals-1305-buildings-after-mumbai-logs-2749-new-covid-19-cases/articleshow/81126419.cms>

## **US COVID-19 markers decline; vaccine makers eye expanding recipient pool**

Across the country 7-day averages of new COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are dropping in 43 and 49 states, respectively. According to CNBC, only Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming reported a rise in new cases. The US reported 69,230 new COVID-19 cases yesterday, and 2,542 deaths, according to the Johns Hopkins COVID-19 tracker. In total, the US remains the hardest hit country in the global pandemic, with 27,950,547 cases and 495,015 deaths. The news of case declines comes as Pfizer and BioNTech, the makers of the first mRNA vaccine approved for use in the United States, began a global phase 2/3 trial targeting pregnant women, and submitted new temperature data to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) suggesting they could allow their COVID-19 vaccine to be stored in pharmacy freezers rather than ultra-cold storage facilities.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/02/us-covid-19-markers-decline-vaccine-makers-eye-expanding-recipient-pool>

## **New Lockdown**

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### **Mayor of French city of Nice calls for weekend coronavirus lockdown**

The mayor of the French Mediterranean city of Nice called on Sunday for a weekend lockdown in the area to stop the flow of visitors and curb a sharp spike in coronavirus infections. "We need a strong measures that go beyond the nationwide 6 p.m. curfew, either a tighter curfew, or a partial and time-specific lockdown. A weekend lockdown would make sense ...that would stop the inflow of visitors," Mayor Christian Estrosi said on franceinfo radio.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-france/mayor-of-french-city-of-nice-calls-for-weekend-coronavirus-lockdown-idUSP6N2K801>

### **France considers partial lockdown for Nice region after spike in Covid cases**

France's Health Minister has said the city of Nice and the surrounding department of Alpes-Maritimes is facing a partial lockdown or an even stricter curfew, after a jump in the number of new coronavirus infections in recent days. Olivier Véran said decisions about further tightening limits on people's movements would be taken over the weekend. "There are a few cities and areas in France where the virus is circulating much more quickly than elsewhere and this may require regional confinement measures," the health minister said during a visit to a health centre in Nice.

<https://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20210220-france-considers-partial-lockdown-for-nice-region-after-spike-in-covid-cases-alpes-maritime-olivier-veran>

### **Iraq sees record Covid-19 cases as new lockdown begins**

New lockdown measures came into effect in Iraq on Friday as it recorded its highest new coronavirus caseload in 2021 -- double the daily figures from less than a week ago. Earlier this week, health authorities announced new overnight curfews would begin on February 18th, from 8:00 pm until 5:00 am, as well as full lockdowns on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. On its first full lockdown day on Friday, Baghdad's main roads were clear of the usual traffic and security forces had set up new checkpoints to stop violators.

<https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210219-iraq-sees-record-covid-19-cases-as-new-lockdown-begins>

### **Coronavirus: India records 13,993 new cases and 101 deaths, lockdown imposed in parts of Maharashtra**

India reported 13,993 new cases of coronavirus in the last 24 hours on Saturday, as the total number of cases went up to 1,09,77,387, according to health ministry data. The toll rose to 1,56,212, with 101 new deaths, while the number of active cases in the country stood at 1,43,127. A total of 1,07,15,204 doses of the coronavirus vaccine have been administered so far to health workers and frontline workers, according to the government data.

<https://scroll.in/latest/987443/coronavirus-india-records-13993-new-cases-and-101-deaths-lockdown-imposed-in-parts-of-maharashtra>