

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

11th Nov 2021

Lockdown Exit

France experiencing start of fifth wave of COVID epidemic -minister

France is at the beginning of a fifth wave of the coronavirus epidemic, Health Minister Olivier Veran said on Wednesday. "Several neighboring countries are already in a fifth wave of the COVID epidemic, what we are experiencing in France clearly looks like the beginning of a fifth wave," Veran said on TF1 television, adding the circulation of the virus was accelerating. The health ministry registered 11,883 new cases on Wednesday, the second day in a row with a new case tally over 10,000. New cases have seen double-digit percentage increases week-on-week since around mid-October.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/france-experiencing-start-fifth-wave-covid-epidemic-minister-2021-11-10/>

Denmark revisits its 'corona pass' as third wave of epidemic looms

Denmark's government on Monday proposed reinstating the use of a digital "corona pass" to be presented when Danes visit indoor bars and restaurants, as the country is entering a third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Denmark was one of few countries to lift almost all remaining restrictions in September after having avoided a third wave of infections over spring and summer due to broad lockdown measures imposed since Christmas.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/denmark-reinstate-corona-passport-after-rise-infections-tv-2-2021-11-08/>

Denmark to reintroduce Covid restrictions just two months after dropping them

Denmark is to reintroduce its coronavirus passport amid rising case numbers in the Nordic country. Parliament is preparing to designate the virus a "critical threat to society" just two months after almost all of Covid-19 restrictions were dropped, on September 10. It comes amid growing concerns about the pandemic's resurgence in Europe as winter arrives. The Covid passport will be reintroduced in indoor bars and restaurants, as well as nightclubs. The digital "corona pass" indicates whether a person has been vaccinated, has had a recent negative test, or has recently recovered from Covid.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/covid-denmark-reintroduce-coronavirus-passport-restrictions-rising-cases-b965341.html>

The US and Europe have finally reconnected, but they're moving in different directions on Covid-19

In September, when the White House announced its long-awaited plan to welcome vaccinated European travelers, the United States was consumed by a Covid-19 surge that far outpaced Europe's. At that point the US rate of new cases per capita dwarfed Europe's by nearly three to one. While European governments were plotting their roadmaps towards normality, America was battling a rise in infections and warning of pressure on hospitals. But by Monday, when the new rules came into effect and thousands of tourists jetted across the Atlantic to American cities, the two regions had experienced a dramatic reversal in fortunes.

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/10/europe/us-europe-covid-winter-comparisons-intl-cmd/index.html>

Aucklanders return to malls as New Zealand eases lockdown in biggest city

Article reports that sShops and malls in New Zealand's biggest city Auckland flung their doors open for the first time in three months on Wednesday as the city, which is at the epicentre of the

country's coronavirus outbreak, gradually reopened. Retail stores filled up within hours of reopening due to pent up demand while some shoppers reportedly queued up outside malls overnight to take advantage of early bird offers at some stores.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/aucklanders-return-malls-new-zealand-eases-lockdown-biggest-city-2021-11-10/>

Exit Strategies

Another Covid Winter Threatens Europe's More Vulnerable Nations

Europe is divided as it enters another Covid-19 winter. In some countries, people are dying from the virus at record rates. Elsewhere, infections are rising—but from low levels that policy makers say are the result of a suite of restrictive policies. Winter is the time of greatest peril in the fight against Covid-19 as people move indoors, often into poorly ventilated spaces, helping the virus to spread. Health systems are also often strained by other seasonal ailments, such as flu. In Italy, Spain and much of the rest of Southern Europe and France, deaths, hospitalizations and confirmed infections from the virus are rising, but still relatively subdued.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/another-covid-winter-threatens-europes-more-vulnerable-nations-1163655455>

Germany Favors Pfizer Shot Over Moderna for Young, Pregnant

Germany's vaccine commission recommended that people under 30 and pregnant women should get the Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech SE Covid shot rather than one from Moderna Inc. Rare heart-inflammation side effects appear more common with Moderna's shot in younger patients, the commission said. While there's no comparable safety data for pregnant women, the group advised the Pfizer-BioNTech shot out of caution. The recommendation applies for early vaccine rounds as well as boosters. There appears to be no heightened risk for people over 30, the commission said. The German call follows a similar recent move in France, where health officials recommended using the Pfizer-BioNTech shot, whenever possible, in the under-30 population.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-10/germany-favors-pfizer-shot-over-moderna-for-young-and-pregnant>

Europe Is Experiencing Two Very Different Pandemics

Waning immunity is the bigger threat, and highly-inoculated countries like Spain or Denmark — where nearly 100% of over-60s have been fully vaccinated — are focused on zapping complacency with booster shots. Even controversial measures like health passes and mandatory shots for medical staff have paid off and lifted take-up despite protests. On Tuesday, French President Emmanuel Macron said France's Covid pass would require third doses for the elderly. These countries have some of the world's highest vaccination rates, and, as Lone Simonsen, a professor at Roskilde University, puts it, they have the "luxury" of making minor adjustments, such as bringing back mask-wearing, to avoid a return to the full-scale lockdowns of 2020. Look further East, though, and there are signs of a "pandemic of the unvaccinated," to borrow a U.S. term. Vaccination rates in eastern European countries are far, far lower — often fatally so.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2021-11-10/covid-in-europe-france-spain-bulgaria-romania-see-different-pandemics>

Booster jab will be needed for Covid pass in future, Sajid Javid hints

Older people will face restrictions on their freedoms in future if they choose not to have a Covid booster jab, the health secretary has suggested. Sajid Javid hinted the government is considering adopting a crackdown similar to that in France - which will require a third dose in order to be classed as "fully vaccinated" on the country's health pass.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/covid-pass-booster-jab-sajid-javid-b1954946.html>

Belgium to extend coronavirus vaccine boosters to all

Belgium intends to roll out COVID-19 vaccine third jabs for all citizens, a government minister said Wednesday. During an inter-ministerial conference on public health, ministers agreed to develop a “global vision” on third shots, tweeted Wouter Beke, minister of health and family. Details of the booster program will be ironed out at a meeting on November 27, he said, to “give vaccination centers the clarity they demand.”

<https://www.politico.eu/article/belgium-to-extend-coronavirus-vaccine-boosters-to-all/>

Covid-19 news: Booster shots now mandatory for French vaccine passes

French people aged over 65 will have to have a third dose of the coronavirus vaccine to prove they have been fully vaccinated on their health passes from mid-December. The passes show if a person has been immunised, has recently recovered from infection or has recently had a negative test. In France they are needed for many common activities including going to restaurants and bars, libraries, the gym and for long-distance train and plane journeys. President Emmanuel Macron also said yesterday that boosters would be available for people between the ages of 50 and 65 from next month, and that use of health passes would increase. Although infection rates in France are lower than in some other European countries such as Germany, they are rising. Macron said a “fifth wave” of covid-19 had arrived in Europe. “We are not yet finished with the pandemic.”

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2237475-covid-19-news-booster-shots-now-mandatory-for-french-vaccine-passes/>

France's Macron demands acceleration of COVID-19 booster shots

French President Emmanuel Macron called for an acceleration of COVID-19 booster shots for elderly and vulnerable citizens and said a third injection would be made available to those aged 50-64 from early December. Macron, warning of the emergence of a fifth wave of infections in Europe, also urged the small minority of French citizens who are not vaccinated to do so. "Get vaccinated. Get vaccinated to protect yourselves. Get vaccinated to live normally," Macron said during a televised address.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/frances-macron-demands-acceleration-covid-19-booster-shots-2021-11-09/>

Thailand offers COVID-19 vaccines to migrant workers

Thailand will set aside up to 500,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines for foreign workers as it prepares to welcome them back to the country to help ease a labour shortage, a government minister said on Wednesday. The government plans to allow workers from neighbouring Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos to re-enter the country beginning next month and fill up shortages in big exporting industries such as food and rubber production. Workers will be placed in a two-week quarantine and during that time the vaccines will be administered, Labor Minister Suchart Chomklin said. They will also be tested for COVID-19.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/thailand-offers-covid-19-vaccines-migrant-workers-2021-11-10/>

Vietnam to have enough COVID-19 vaccines for population by end-Nov - minister

Vietnam will by the end of this month have sufficient vaccines to cover its population against COVID-19, a deputy prime minister said on Wednesday. "The fight against the pandemic, however, will continue," Vu Duc Dam told the national assembly, adding people must maintain health protocols.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/vietnam-have-enough-covid-19-vaccines-population-by-end-nov-minister-2021-11-10/>

S.Korea urges COVID-19 booster shots, as severe cases hit record

South Korea encouraged its citizens to take COVID-19 booster shots on Wednesday, as more of the elderly fell ill and reported vaccine breakthrough infections, driving serious and critical cases to a record. Severe coronavirus cases jumped from the mid-300s in October to 460 on Wednesday, official data showed. Of the severely ill patients, more than 82% were aged 60 and older. Son Young-

rae, a senior health ministry official, told a news conference that the increase is not posing a threat to the country's healthcare system yet, as there are nearly 500 ICU beds available.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/skorea-urges-covid-19-booster-shots-severe-cases-hit-record-2021-11-10/>

Health workers in England must get COVID vaccine by April 1 -minister

Health workers in England will have to be vaccinated against COVID-19 by April 1, health minister Sajid Javid said on Tuesday, making it a mandatory condition of employment for those on the frontline of the National Health Service (NHS). Prime Minister Boris Johnson is seeking to navigate a difficult winter for the health system without further economically damaging lockdowns to help protect against COVID-19 contagion.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/health-workers-england-required-get-covid-vaccine-minister-2021-11-09/>

Guinea starts vaccinating children against COVID-19 with Pfizer, Moderna

Guinea will begin vaccinating children aged 12-17 against COVID-19 with a consignment of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines on Wednesday, the health ministry said. Most African countries have been reliant on the COVAX vaccine sharing initiative for doses, and have inoculated only a small fraction of their populations. Guinea received a quantity of the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines in late October and early November, the National Agency for Health Security said in a statement. It did not say how many doses were received or from where.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/guinea-starts-vaccinating-children-against-covid-19-with-pfizer-moderna-2021-11-10/>

Understanding health care consumer preferences is key to effective Covid-19 vaccination messaging

Health care, like politics, is local. The performance of certain procedures or the prevalence of particular conditions vary from community to community. So do individuals' preferences on how they choose to obtain care. One thing that doesn't vary as much is the trust people have in their providers. That's why throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, apart from mandates, frontline clinicians broadly have had the greatest impact on influencing the adoption of Covid-19 vaccines. Understanding the impact physicians have is particularly important as the country continues to drive vaccine uptake among adults, approach expanding eligibility to those under age 12, and begin the booster phase of Covid-19 vaccines.

<https://www.statnews.com/2021/11/10/health-care-consumer-preferences-effective-covid-19-vaccination-messaging/>

Partisan Exits

Pfizer CEO says people who spread vaccine disinformation are 'criminals'

Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said Tuesday that people who spread disinformation about coronavirus vaccines are "criminals." Bourla, in an interview with the Atlantic Council think tank, said a "very small" group has been responsible for spreading vaccine disinformation to the millions who remain hesitant about getting vaccinated.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/11/09/pfizer-ceo-bourla-vaccine-disinformation/>

Fewer Than 1% of NYC Workers on Leave Due to Vaccine Mandate

Emmanuelle Pinault, Director of City Diplomacy, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group; Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol and C40-MMC Task Force Member; and Raphaela Schweiger, Program Director Migration, Global Issues, Robert Bosch Stiftung explore how city governments can deliver inclusive climate action with Bloomberg's Mallika Kapur.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/videos/2021-11-09/c40-cities-leaders-on-climate-migration-video>

Singapore will stop covering the medical bills of unvaccinated COVID-19 patients

Singapore's government has been covering the medical bills of COVID-19 patients throughout the pandemic. But it says unvaccinated people will soon be on their own. Those who are "unvaccinated

by choice" will have to start paying for their own COVID-19 treatment starting Dec. 8, the Ministry of Health announced on Monday, citing the strain they are putting on the nation's health care system. "Currently, unvaccinated persons make up a sizeable majority of those who require intensive inpatient care, and disproportionately contribute to the strain on our healthcare resources," it said in a statement.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2021/11/09/1053889069/singapore-medical-bills-covid-19-patients-unvaccinated-by-choice>

COVID-19: One of UK's longest-suffering coronavirus patients confronted by conspiracy theorist in hospital

Cancer survivor Andy Watts, 40, fell seriously ill with COVID in December and spent 10 months in hospital. He tells Sky News that some visitors in his ward believed the virus was a hoax despite his ordeal.

<https://news.sky.com/story/covid-19-one-of-uks-longest-suffering-coronavirus-patients-confronted-by-conspiracy-theorist-in-hospital-12464778>

Scientific Viewpoint

Next generation of Covid vaccines should target different part of virus, study says

A vaccine targeting Covid's replication proteins could knock all coronaviruses. Study found some NHS staff who tested negative had T cells against the virus. Current vaccines mainly target the spike protein to trigger antibody response

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10186397/Next-generation-Covid-vaccines-target-different-virus-study-says.html>

Pfizer, BioNTech Ask FDA to Expand Covid-19 Booster Use to All Adults

Pfizer Inc. and partner BioNTech asked U.S. health regulators to expand the authorization of their Covid-19 booster to people as young as 18 years old, as the government explores expanding access to extra doses. The application opens the door for authorization of the extra dose potentially before the end of the year, which could provide millions of people with another layer of security as winter drives many indoors where the risk of transmission is higher. The Food and Drug Administration in September cleared a third dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for adults who are 65 years and older or are at risk of severe disease and death, including because of their jobs or where they live.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/pfizer-biontech-ask-fda-to-expand-covid-19-booster-use-to-all-adults-11636489789>

Two Million Ellume Covid Tests Recalled on False Positive Risk

Ellume Ltd. is recalling 2.2 million at-home Covid-19 tests because they risk returning false positives, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration said. The regulator classified the action on Wednesday as a class I recall, the most serious kind, saying it has received 35 reports of false positives from the test made by the Australian company. Incorrect results could lead a person to wrongly receive Covid-19 treatments or isolate when they don't need to, the FDA said. "The Ellume team offers its sincere apologies for the stress or difficulties people may have experienced due to a false positive result," a company spokesperson said in an email. "We have and will continue to work diligently to ensure test accuracy, in all cases."

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-10/two-million-ellume-covid-tests-recalled-on-false-positive-risk>

U.S. Spending \$650 Million to Expand Rapid Confirmatory Testing

The U.S. will spend \$650 million to increase production and access to rapid diagnostic tests that can confirm the results of at-home screening, part of an effort to quickly identify and treat people with Covid-19. People who buy over-the-counter rapid antigen tests at pharmacies may need confirmatory testing to verify the accuracy of the result, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services said Wednesday in a statement. The funds will help ensure such tests are readily available across the

country and can provide results quickly, the agency said. The investment follows the Biden administration's commitment of more than \$3 billion for rapid home tests that may need confirmation. The earlier funding aimed to quadruple the amount of rapid home tests available in the U.S. by December, to about 200 million a month.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-10/u-s-spending-650-million-to-expand-rapid-confirmatory-testing>

French company Valneva wins deal with European Commission over COVID-19 vaccines

French vaccines company Valneva's share price jumped more than 20% on Wednesday after it won European Commission approval for a deal under which it would supply up to 60 million doses of its COVID-19 vaccine candidate over two years. The eighth such deal by the European Union's executive body in the fight against rising infections is a welcome boost for Valneva as it negotiates what has been a bumpy road for its COVID-19 vaccine. "The Valneva vaccine adds another option to our broad portfolio, once it is proven to be safe and effective by the European Medicines Agency (EMA)," EU health commissioner Stella Kyriakides said.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/french-company-valneva-wins-deal-with-european-commission-over-covid-19-vaccines-2021-11-10/>

Israeli MRI study finds heart damage from COVID-19 vaccine is rare and mild

A study conducted by Beilinson Hospital in Petah Tikva, using a detailed scanning technique to examine patients with symptoms of a heart muscle condition after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, found that damage was rare, mild, and expected to heal. The study used cardiac magnetic resonance imaging on patients diagnosed with myocarditis, a weakening of the heart muscles that has been found in a few patients after they were inoculated. A link has been seen in recent months between coronavirus vaccines using mRNA technology and very rare cases of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscle) and pericarditis (inflammation of the lining around the heart).

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-mri-study-finds-heart-damage-from-covid-19-vaccine-is-rare-and-mild/>

Pfizer asks FDA for broader authorization of vaccine booster

Pfizer and its German partner, BioNTech, on Tuesday asked the Food and Drug Administration to authorize a booster dose of its coronavirus vaccine for people 18 and older. The FDA could clear the request by the end of the month, according to health officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the issue. The officials are concerned about studies showing waning vaccine protection, as well as increased infections in parts of the United States. Currently, the government recommends the Pfizer-BioNTech booster vaccine for people 65 and older and those 18 to 64 who are at high risk of covid-19, the disease caused by the virus, because of underlying medical conditions or potential exposures at work or in their living situation.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/11/09/covid-delta-variant-live-updates/>

COVID-19 tests may be more accurate in the afternoon

A new study finds that the accuracy of reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) COVID-19 tests follows a daily pattern. The highest number of accurate positive results occur with midafternoon tests, while evening tests increase the number of false positives. The study also suggests that midafternoon is the time of day at which both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals are most likely to pass on the SARS-CoV-2 virus to others.

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/covid-19-tests-accuracy-vary-throughout-the-day>

Germany recommends only Biontech/Pfizer vaccine for under-30s

Panel recommends only Biontech/Pfizer for under-30s. Makes similar recommendation for pregnant women. More heart inflammation cases with Moderna jab-data. Germany sees record number of COVID cases for third day

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/germany-recommends-only-biontechpfizer-vaccine-people-under-30-2021-11-10/>

Vietnam approves India's COVID-19 vaccine Covaxin

Vietnam has approved India's Covaxin vaccine for emergency use, the ninth to be endorsed in the country, the country's health ministry said on Wednesday. The government said in July it was seeking to secure 15 million doses of the Covaxin vaccine made by Bharat Biotech.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/vietnam-approves-indias-covid-19-vaccine-covaxin-2021-11-10/>

BioNTech CEO says new COVID pills unlikely to dent vaccination uptake

The Chief Executive of COVID-19 vaccine pioneer BioNTech said he does not expect for now that new oral treatments against the viral infection would considerably reduce demand for vaccines. Oral antiviral pills from Merck & Co and Pfizer Inc have been shown to significantly blunt the worst outcomes of COVID-19. "I really don't believe that it will have a huge impact on the vaccination rate in future but we have to monitor the field," BioNTech CEO Ugur Sahin told an analyst call

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/biontech-ceo-says-new-covid-pills-unlikely-dent-vaccination-uptake-2021-11-09/>

Pfizer seeks FDA nod for COVID vaccine boosters for U.S. adults

Pfizer Inc and BioNTech on Tuesday requested the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to authorize booster doses of their COVID-19 vaccine in all adults, presenting recent data showing the shot would help prevent disease across ages. Over the past several months, the FDA has authorized Pfizer's boosters for people who are immunocompromised, those who are aged 65 and above, all people at high risk of severe disease, and people who are regularly exposed to the virus.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/pfizer-biontech-again-seek-us-nod-covid-19-vaccine-boosters-all-adults-2021-11-09/>

EU to decide on Moderna's COVID-19 shot for younger kids in two months

The European Union's drug regulator expects to decide in about two months on whether to allow the use of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine in children aged six to 11 years, it said on Wednesday, after the U.S. drugmaker sought approval. "The current timeline for evaluation foresees an opinion in approximately 2 months, unless supplementary information or analysis is needed," the European Medicines Agency (EMA) said in a statement.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/eu-decide-modernas-covid-19-shot-younger-kids-two-months-2021-11-10/>

Long COVID symptoms may have causes other than SARS-CoV-2

A French study finds that, of 20 persistent physical symptoms reported by adults who said they had recovered from COVID-19, only 1 was linked to SARS-CoV-2 infection, as indicated by the presence of antibodies to the virus. The researchers, however, said that the results don't discount the presence of symptoms but rather underscore the importance of considering all possible causes in addition to COVID-19, such as other diseases, anxiety, or deconditioning related to the pandemic but not the virus itself. The study, published yesterday in JAMA Internal Medicine, involved analysis of blood samples from 26,823 adult participants who reported recovering from COVID-19.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/11/long-covid-symptoms-may-have-causes-other-sars-cov-2>

Moderna, U.S. clash in patent dispute over origins of COVID-19 vaccine: report

The public/private partnership between the U.S. government and Moderna to quickly develop a COVID-19 vaccine has been lauded as a feel-good success story—and a blueprint for future health crises. But less than a year after Moderna gained FDA authorization for its vaccine, its marriage with the feds is on the rocks. The company has done little to appease the Biden administration's call to make the vaccine available to poor countries, and now a much bigger battle over patent rights is brewing, The New York Times reports. The issue surrounds a July filing by Moderna with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office which claims that it invented the vaccine. Meanwhile, the NIH says that

three of its scientists created key elements of the shot.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/moderna-u-s-clash-patent-dispute-over-development-covid-19-vaccine-report>

AstraZeneca creates unit to handle its COVID-19 vaccines, antibody treatments

As AstraZeneca suffered a series of missteps in the development, manufacture and distribution of its COVID-19 vaccine, other companies surged ahead in the race to provide shots to the world. Was AstraZeneca ill equipped for the monumental task? With the creation of a new unit responsible for COVID-19 treatments, including vaccines and antibodies, the company is attempting to better manage its response to the pandemic. Iskra Reic, a senior executive who heads up the company's operations in Europe and Canada, will take control of the division, allowing CEO Pascal Soriot to manage the company's bread-and-butter business. The new unit will have R&D, manufacturing, commercial and medical branches.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/astrazeneca-creates-unit-to-handle-its-covid-19-vaccines-and-antibody-treatments>

Coronavirus Resurgence

WHO highlights that Europe is only region with rising COVID cases and deaths, as Russia overtakes U.S. for most fatalities in a week

The World Health Organization highlighted Wednesday that Europe was the only region showing rising cases and deaths from the coronavirus-borne illness COVID-19 in the latest week, led by Russia, where low vaccine take-up is believed to be responsible for about 1,200 deaths a day. Russia counted 281,305 new cases in the week to Nov. 7, according to the agency's weekly epidemiological update, or 371.4 new cases per 100,000 residents. There were 8,276 new fatalities in Russia in the week, or 5.7 new deaths per 100,000 residents, little changed from the prior week. Russia set yet another one-day record death toll on Wednesday of 1,239, and is now leading the world by weekly deaths for the first time since the start of the pandemic, the Moscow Times reported.

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/who-highlights-that-europe-is-only-region-with-rising-covid-cases-and-deaths-as-russia-overtakes-u-s-for-most-fatalities-in-a-week-11636558256>

Germany coronavirus: Record rise prompts warning of 100,000 deaths

One of Germany's top virologists has warned that a further 100,000 people will die from Covid if nothing's done to halt an aggressive fourth wave. Case numbers have soared and Germany on Wednesday registered its highest rate of infection since the pandemic began, with almost 40,000 cases in a day. "We have to act right now," said Christian Drosten, who described a real emergency situation. Doctors in the intensive care Covid ward at Leipzig University Hospital warn this fourth wave could be the worst yet.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-59234443>

Chinese city says it mass tested 30000 for COVID-19 at mega centre, rounded-up runaways

China's southwestern city of Chengdu said on Wednesday it had conducted 30,000 COVID-19 tests on visitors at a mega entertainment centre, and rounded-up those who tried to flee the site, in the second mass screening at a large venue in days. All COVID-19 tests returned negative results, reported the official China Central Television (CCTV) on Tuesday. Those present were required to return home to await their results and not venture outdoors until advised, local authorities in Chengdu said in a notice

<https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/chinese-city-says-it-mass-tested-30000-covid-19-mega-centre-rounded-up-runaways-2021-11-10/>

Russia says it's turned tide on COVID cases, but deaths hit record high

Russia said last week's nationwide workplace shutdown had helped turn the tide of surging

COVID-19 cases, even as officials on Tuesday reported the largest one-day death toll of the pandemic so far. All but a handful of Russia's 80-plus regions on Monday ended a "non-working" period from Oct. 30 to Nov. 7 that was ordered by President Vladimir Putin, the toughest nationwide restriction since the early months of the pandemic.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russias-daily-covid-19-death-toll-hits-new-record-high-2021-11-09/>

Czechs, Slovaks report surge in COVID-19 cases, hospitals stretched

The Czech Republic and Slovakia reported fresh surges in coronavirus infections on Wednesday and again had to start limiting non-urgent hospital care to cater for admissions of COVID-19 patients. Slovakia, a country of 5.5 million, reported a record high 7,055 new cases for Tuesday, and the Czech Republic, twice the size, reported 14,539 cases, not far from an all-time peak seen in January. Both countries have been tightening restrictions but they have been far more lax than in previous waves thanks to partial shielding from vaccination and infections affecting younger people.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/czechs-record-highest-daily-tally-covid-19-cases-since-march-2021-11-10/>

UK reports 262 COVID-19 deaths, seven-day total up 2.6%

Britain reported 262 new deaths within 28 days of a positive COVID-19 test on Tuesday, up from 57 a day earlier, while the total death toll for the past seven days was 1,160, up 2.6% on the previous seven days, official data showed. A new 33,117 confirmed cases of the virus were also reported, up from 32,322 on Monday. The total for the past seven days was 239,034, down by 14.8% on the previous seven-day period.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/uk/uk-reports-262-covid-19-deaths-seven-day-total-up-26-2021-11-09/>

As many try living with virus, China keeps up zero tolerance

Article reports that Wang Lijie planned to spend three days in the Gobi Desert last month to take in the area's famous poplar forest as its trees turned a golden yellow. Instead, the Beijing resident has been stuck for more than three weeks, much of it in quarantine, after authorities discovered a cluster of COVID-19 cases in a nearby city. He was among more than 9,000 tourists who became trapped in Ejin Banner, a remote part of China's Inner Mongolia region that is in the Gobi. As vaccination rates rise in many parts of the world and even countries that previously had strict COVID-containment strategies gingerly ease restrictions, China is doubling down on its zero-tolerance policy.

<https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-immigration-business-taiwan-wuhan-a5bf3ccccf435a5adf45faa57758c9f7>

COVID-19 surges expand in Europe

At least three countries, all with low vaccination rates, reported new daily record highs for deaths: Russia, Ukraine, and Bulgaria, according to media reports. Russia recently ended a week-long non-working period, and federal officials said it's too soon to tell if the step helped cut transmission, according to the Washington Post, which said less than 40% of the country is fully vaccinated. Cases are on the rise, however, even in countries with robust vaccine uptake. In the Netherlands, where cases have been rising since early October, the adult vaccination level is about 85%. A hospital group in the southern province of Limburg today urged the government to take stronger measures, warning that they are out of space and staff and that other areas may soon face similar situations, according to Reuters.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2021/11/covid-19-surges-expand-europe>