

COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis

24th Aug 2020

News Highlights

More Covid-19 cases reported in Auckland as New Zealand defers lockdown decision

New coronavirus infections continue to be reported in New Zealand weeks after Prime Minister Jacinda Arden placed it's biggest city, Auckland, under a full lockdown until August 26th. [Arden deferred the decision on whether to ease a lockdown on the city and said that there was no need to change any setting at this stage](#), but promised to review the situation again on Monday.

More than 60,000 dead even as signs of hope emerge in Mexico

Musicians around the world have suffered during the pandemic but in Mexico, guitar players like Eberardo Vargas have been kept busy over the last three months, having to play at many funerals. [However, the number of people dying daily of Covid-19 seems to be decreasing daily](#), even as Mexico passed the grim milestone of 60,000 coronavirus deaths, the highest number of deaths outside the USA and Brazil.

Germany stages live concert as experiment to study virus transmission

Researchers in Germany are attempting to study how the coronavirus spreads indoors by staging a show with singer-songwriter Tim Bendzko and 4,000 actual fans. Researchers are hoping their controlled study, called RESTART-19, [will yield answers about how to safely restart live music and sporting events in indoor settings beginning as early as this autumn](#).

Official says China giving experimental coronavirus vaccine to high risk groups for months

As the global race heats up to discover a working Covid-19 vaccine, [a Chinese health official has told state TV that the country has already been giving its experimental Covid-19 vaccine to high risk groups such as medical workers and people working in the food, transportation and service sectors](#). The official said that the aim is to boost the immunity of these workers and that its use could be expanded to prevent possible outbreaks during the autumn and winter.

Lockdown Exit

Germany COVID concerts: Experiment to study virus transmission

Restart-19 is studying the movement of people and flight of the tiny airborne particles that can carry viruses. Scientists in Germany have held three pop concerts to study the risk of virus transmission during large events. The mass experiment, staged with nearly 2,000 people in the city of Leipzig, comes at a time the country has banned all such gatherings until at least the end of October. Al Jazeera's Um-e-Kulsoom reports.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/08/germany-covid-concerts-experiment-study-virus-transmission-200823111306863.html>

Tour de France: teams will be expelled if two members test positive for Covid

Teams will be withdrawn from the Tour de France if two riders or staff show symptoms or test positive for Covid-19 under strict protocols from race organisers. However the race, which starts in Nice on 29 August, will continue even if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in the peloton according to an 18-page document shared with teams this week. "If two persons or more from the same team present strongly suspect symptoms or have tested positive for Covid-19 the team in question will be expelled from the Tour de France," states the document, which has been obtained by the VeloNews website. "Its riders will not be authorised to start the Tour de France (or the next stage) and the team's personnel will have their accreditation withdrawn." All team members will have to enter a "bubble" three days before the race by passing two Covid-19 tests - and everyone in the Tour entourage will be tested again on both rest days, 7 and 14 September.

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2020/aug/21/tour-de-france-teams-will-be-expelled-if-two-members-test-positive-for-covid-cycling>

In China, Where the Coronavirus Pandemic Began, Life Is Starting to Look Normal

Markets, bars and restaurants are crowded again. Local virus transmissions are near zero. But some worry that people are letting their guard down too soon.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/23/world/asia/china-coronavirus-normal-life.html>

Scale of pandemic in Mexico 'under-recognised', says WHO

The scale of the coronavirus pandemic in Mexico is "under-represented" and "under-recognised" and testing is limited, the World Health Organization's Dr Mike Ryan said on Friday. He told a Geneva briefing that testing in Mexico worked out at about three people per 100,000, compared with about 150 tests per 100,000 people in the United States. More than 22.78 million people have been reported to be infected by the novel coronavirus globally and 792,837 have died, according to a Reuters tally.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-who-mexico/scale-of-pandemic-in-mexico-under-recognised-says-who-idUKKBN25H27X>

Thailand tops the list of the world's safest destinations during COVID-19

Thailand was considered the world's safest travel destination during the COVID-19 pandemic based on various criteria including the 14-day notification rate of new COVID-19 cases and deaths per the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

<https://www.thailand-business-news.com/tourism/80335-thailand-tops-the-list-of-the-worlds-safest-destinations-during-covid-19.html>

Beijing says residents can go mask-free as China COVID cases hit new lows

Health authorities in China's capital Beijing have removed a requirement for people to wear masks outdoors, further relaxing rules aimed at preventing the spread the novel coronavirus after the city reported 13 consecutive days without new cases. Despite the relaxed guidelines, a large proportion of people continued to wear masks in Beijing on Friday. Some said the mask made them feel safe, while others said social pressures to wear the masks were also a factor. "I think I can take off my mask anytime, but I'll need to see if others accept it. Because I'm afraid that people would be scared if they see me not wearing mask," one 24-year old Beijing woman surnamed Cao told Reuters.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-beijing-masks/beijing-says-residents-can-go-mask-free-as-china-covid-cases-hit-new-lows-idUKKBN25H0H8>

Pope Francis prays for victims of Covid-19

Pope Francis turns his thoughts and prayers to the victims of the novel coronavirus, and recalls the 4th anniversary of a deadly earthquake in central Italy.

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-08/pope-francis-angelus-coronavirus-italy-earthquake-cabo-delgado.html>

COVID-19 response: How Italy went from 'well-prepared' to worst-hit in a few weeks

While there are many things that need to be fixed in Italy's health system, a comprehensive, integrated health information system could make the overall health system upgradation process seamless and cost-effective as it will improve the monitoring and evaluation process.

<https://www.devdiscourse.com/article/health/1179185-covid-19-response-how-italy-went-from-well-prepared-to-worst-hit-in-a-few-weeks>

The Masked Singer production shut down after coronavirus outbreak on Melbourne set

The Melbourne set of The Masked Singer has been shut down after several crew members tested positive for the coronavirus. "The entire production team, including the masked singers, the host and panellists are now in self-isolation," the Network 10 program posted on Twitter late on Saturday night. "They are all being monitored closely and are in constant contact with medical authorities."

<https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2020/aug/23/the-masked-singer-production-shut-down-after-coronavirus-outbreak-on-melbourne-set>

India, Brazil, and South Africa will face the 'harshest' economic impact from the coronavirus in major na..

India, Brazil, and South Africa will face the 'harshest' economic impact from the coronavirus in major nations as they're corrupt and badly run, a report says

<https://www.businessinsider.com/coronavirus-economic-impact-worst-india-south-africa-brazil-verisk-2020-8>

Exit Strategies

Brazil's coronavirus spread on 'stable or downwards' trend, WHO says

The coronavirus crisis in Brazil appears to be leveling off, if not easing, the World Health Organization said on Friday, offering a chink of light for the world's second biggest COVID-19 hot spot.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-coronavirus-health-brazil/brazils-coronavirus-spread-on-stable-or-downwards-trend-who-says-idUKKBN25H2QM>

French teachers prepare for special 'la rentrée' amid Covid-19 spike, tensions

Middle and high school students in France will return to classrooms on September 1. But as the country's daily tallies of new coronavirus infections rise, some teachers are concerned about the conditions they and their students will face, including heightened sanitary measures. The daily levels of new coronavirus infections in France have been rising for several weeks, but the new school year (la rentrée scolaire) is set to start on September 1. Affirming that "education is more important than anything", Minister of Education Jean-Michel Blanquer gave his assurance on August 20 that students would be welcome in class every day. He also announced that stricter sanitary measures would be in place, notably concerning face masks.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/french-teachers-prepare-special-la-141239160.html>

Coronavirus: Schools let down by lack of 'plan B', says union

More staff, extra teaching space and greater clarity on what to do if there is a spike in cases is needed for schools to reopen safely, the UK's largest teaching union has said. The National Education Union (NEU) accused the government of letting down pupils, teachers and parents by failing to have a "plan B" if infections rise. The UK's four chief medical officers have insisted it is safe to return. The education secretary said ministers were doing "everything we can" to help. Millions of pupils in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are due to return to school in the coming days and weeks. In Scotland, schools have already reopened.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53882613>

The meaning of life: Australians praying more during COVID-19

Churches may have closed their doors, but more Australians are opening their minds to spirituality

and prayer. Researchers have found Australians say they have been praying more during the COVID-19 crisis, suggesting the pandemic has led many to reassess their priorities in life.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/the-meaning-of-life-australians-praying-more-during-covid-19-20200820-p55nla.html>

Give students hope amid coronavirus mental health crisis, experts urge

The suicides of some year 11 and 12 students have prompted mental health experts to warn that Australia must act quickly to counteract a growing sense of hopelessness among HSC students. Parents and teachers are increasingly worried about the welfare of senior students as their rites of passage are cancelled, the job market shrinks and the tertiary education sector faces a financial crisis due to the coronavirus pandemic.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/give-students-hope-amid-coronavirus-mental-health-crisis-experts-urge-20200821-p55o55.html>

Australia's mental health funding has surged after coronavirus - so why is it so difficult to get help?

Many people are being forced to wait for weeks or months, with 'far more people needing support than there are people to provide them'

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/aug/23/mental-health-funding-has-surged-after-coronavirus-so-why-is-it-so-difficult-to-get-help>

Australia's coronavirus death toll passes 500 as Victoria reports 17 more fatalities and 208 new cases

NSW reports four new cases while two more people test positive in Queensland in cluster linked to Brisbane youth detention centre

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/aug/23/australias-coronavirus-death-toll-passes-500-as-victoria-reports-17-more-fatalities-and-208-new-cases>

Socialising pushes Spain's Covid-19 rate far above rest of Europe

Coronavirus is spreading far faster in Spain than in the rest of Europe, confronting the country with a race against time to bring the outbreak under control before the return to school and work next month following the holiday season. Figures published by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, an EU agency, on Friday indicated that in the previous 14 days Spain had reported about 145 new Covid-19 cases per 100,000 of population. Apart from Malta, no other European country had a ratio above 100, and the Spanish figures compare with ratios of 51 in France and 21 in the UK. In three districts of Madrid, the Spanish region with most cases, the equivalent ratio is above 400 and in one it is almost 600. On Friday, the regional government of Madrid urged people in the worst-affected areas to stay at home.

<https://www.ft.com/content/4e3e3e31-87ed-4631-af62-c649efb854ed>

Oscar stars as Chinese football welcomes back fans after coronavirus

The Chinese Super League permitted spectators on Saturday for the first time since the coronavirus pandemic, with former Chelsea star Oscar marking the occasion by hitting the winner. In a significant development for football in China, where the virus emerged last year, up to 2,000 people were allowed to attend the clash in Suzhou between title rivals Shanghai SIPG and Beijing Guoan. SIPG captain Oscar seemed to relish having the limited number of fans back, the 60-million-euro Brazilian setting up his side's equaliser before making it 2-1 with 14 minutes left. Beijing's beaten players unfurled a banner afterwards thanking their supporters, while Oscar blew kisses to the sparse crowd

<https://www.deccanherald.com/sports/football/oscar-stars-as-chinese-football-welcomes-back-fans-after-coronavirus-876581.html>

Partisan Exits

Revealed: Emergency plans to protect UK if second coronavirus spike coincides with no-deal Brexit

Emergency plans drawn up by the government to protect the UK if a second coronavirus spike coincides with a no-deal Brexit have been revealed. A Cabinet Office "reasonable worst-case scenario" document, dated July 2020, has been leaked to The Sun newspaper. A government spokeswoman said it "reflects a responsible government ensuring we are ready for all eventualities".

<https://news.sky.com/story/revealed-emergency-plans-to-protect-uk-if-second-coronavirus-spike-coincides-with-no-deal-brex-12055049>

HK raises concerns over China involvement in COVID-19 tests

Hong Kong has been at the forefront of the coronavirus pandemic and is now joining the global race for a vaccine. The city is also launching voluntary mass coronavirus testing next month to combat what is being seen as a third wave. The government has enlisted the help of medical experts from mainland China, but, as Al Jazeera's Divya Gopalan reports, not everyone supports the move.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/08/hk-raises-concerns-china-involvement-covid-19-tests-200823185639698.html>

'A toxic scandal': Ireland becomes a test case on how NOT to battle COVID-19

Ireland's Minister for Agriculture and deputy chairperson of the Senate resigned Friday after attending an 80-person dinner, directly contravening the guidelines of their own government

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/we-had-everything-in-our-favor-ireland-is-no-new-zealand-and-is-fast-becoming-a-test-case-on-how-not-to-battle-covid-19-2020-08-21>

Macron: 'Reasonable prospect' of having coronavirus vaccine ready in 'coming months'

French President Emmanuel Macron said a vaccine against coronavirus could soon be ready, as he spoke at a joint press conference with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Thursday. The French president is optimistic the cure will arrive "in the coming months" and hailed the EU cooperation on the matter during his speech in Fort Brégançon, in the south-east of France. "We have improved European cooperation on the vaccine together, by associating many other States and the Commission" in encouraging EU manufacturers to look for vaccines, he said. "And to ensure that we will have the capacity to produce them and deliver them to our populations when they are available," the president stressed.

<https://www.euronews.com/2020/08/21/macron-reasonable-prospect-of-having-coronavirus-vaccine-ready-in-coming-months>

South Korea, China hold highest-level talks since COVID-19 outbreak

South Korea said on Saturday it held talks with China's top diplomat over trade, denuclearisation and the coronavirus response, in the first visit by a high-level Beijing official since the COVID-19 pandemic erupted late last year.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-southkorea-china/south-korea-china-hold-highest-level-talks-since-covid-19-outbreak-idUKKBN25I03R>

Peru: 13 killed as police raid club breaking coronavirus curbs

About 120 people in Lima tried to flee a party, banned under current coronavirus restrictions, when police arrived.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/08/peru-13-killed-police-raid-club-breaking-coronavirus-curbs-200823134731654.html>

Australia signs deal for Oxford University coronavirus vaccine as Scott Morrison vows to make it 'as mandatory as you can'

Australia has ordered 25 million doses of a coronavirus vaccine being developed by Oxford

University, in partnership with pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca, the country's prime minister has said. Scott Morrison promised to make the vaccine "as mandatory as you can" in an interview with Melbourne's 3AW radio station,

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/australia-signs-deal-oxford-coronavirus-vaccine-a4528041.html>

Queensland introduces coronavirus restrictions as second NSW quarantine guard tests positive

Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk reports nine new Covid-19 cases, including six linked to Brisbane youth detention centre, as NSW announces another nine infections

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/aug/22/queensland-reimposes-coronavirus-restrictions-as-second-nsw-quarantine-guard-tests-positive>

Local virus outbreak in Myanmar sparks fears for Rohingya camps

Rohingya in Myanmar's conflict-wracked Rakhine state expressed fears Sunday of a coronavirus outbreak reaching their overcrowded camps, after a spate of infections sent the state capital into lockdown. Nearly 130,000 Rohingya Muslims live in what Amnesty International describes as "apartheid" conditions in camps around Sittwe. The city has recorded 48 cases in the past week, making up more than 10 percent of the about 400 cases so far registered in Myanmar

<https://www.france24.com/en/20200823-local-virus-outbreak-in-myanmar-sparks-fears-for-rohingya-camps>

Continued Lockdown

Will France be placed on Switzerland's coronavirus quarantine list?

According to projections from the University of Geneva, arrivals from France may have to quarantine on arrival in Switzerland in the coming days. France's infection rates have almost doubled in the previous week. The University of Geneva set up a forecasting model which predicts that the infection rate will continue to rise in the coming weeks, eventually crossing the Swiss government's quarantine threshold. They now stand at 43 new cases per 100,000 inhabitants - just shy of Switzerland's quarantine threshold of 60 per 100,000. As of August 21st, there are more than 50 countries with an infection rate above Switzerland's threshold of 'high risk'.

<https://www.thelocal.com/20200821/will-france-be-placed-on-switzerlands-coronavirus-quarantine-list>

UK records 1,041 new COVID-19 cases: government data

The United Kingdom recorded 1,041 new cases of COVID-19 on Sunday, down from 1,288 on Saturday, government figures showed. Six people died after testing positive for the coronavirus within the previous 28 days, compared with 18 deaths announced on Saturday.

[https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-cases/uk-records-1041-new-covid-19-cases-government-d-ata-idUKKBN25J0JD](https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-cases/uk-records-1041-new-covid-19-cases-government-data-idUKKBN25J0JD)

Scientific Viewpoint

Trump administration considering fast-tracking UK COVID-19 vaccine before election - FT

President Donald Trump on Sunday hailed FDA authorization of a coronavirus treatment that uses blood plasma from recovered patients, a day after accusing the agency of impeding the rollout of vaccines and therapeutics for political reasons.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-usa-trump/trump-administration-considering-fast-tracking-uk-covid-19-vaccine-before-election-ft-idUKKBN25J0OD>

UK 'could go into second national lockdown' if coronavirus cases spike like in Spain, senior official warns

The UK could be forced into a second nationwide lockdown if rising coronavirus cases reach levels seen in Spain, it has been reported. After the R number in the UK rose to as high as 1.1 - meaning cases could start to spread rapidly - the Government is considering tougher "nationwide measures,"

according to a senior official. The R number could be distorted by local outbreaks which mean the situation is worse in places like Oldham than in the country as a whole - but a further national lockdown could be needed to keep the virus under the control.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/uk-second-lockdown-coronavirus-cases-spike-a4530926.html>

'14-day quarantine not enough for COVID-19 patients'

An expert virologist in Thailand has said a 14-day quarantine period is not enough to ensure full recovery from COVID-19. He suggested that people need to self-isolate for another 14 days -- meaning almost a month -- to be sure the virus is gone. Professor Yong Poovorawan of Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University said he has studied 212 COVID-19 cases and outlined four points in a Facebook post on Thursday. "I found 6.6% of them showed symptoms four to 12 weeks after they were allowed to return home," he said. "We found a virus after 36-105 days of symptoms, but very weak so the possibility of spreading the disease to others is very low." He said the "hatching range" of most COVID-19 cases is two to seven days. "It may be found up to 14 days and it may be less than 21 days," said Poovorawan, who is a medical professor in pediatric hepatology, viral hepatitis and virology.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/14-day-quarantine-not-enough-for-covid-19-patients/1948886>

Trump to announce emergency authorization of convalescent plasma as COVID-19 treatment

In a tweet late Saturday night, White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany said the announcement at 2:30 p.m. Pacific time Sunday involved "a major therapeutic breakthrough on the China virus." Officials confirmed on Sunday the treatment is convalescent plasma; they spoke on the condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to discuss the issue. The White House declined comment.

<https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/trump-to-announce-emergency-authorization-of-convalescent-plasma-as-covid-19-treatment/>

Peru, Morocco to test China Sinopharm's COVID-19 vaccine in Phase 3 trial

Authorities in Peru and Morocco have approved Phase 3 clinical trials for a potential COVID-19 vaccine developed by China National Biotec Group (CNBG), the company said late on Thursday on Chinese social media platform WeChat. Phase 3 trials, which usually involve several thousand participants, allow researchers to gather data on the efficacy of potential vaccines for final regulatory approvals. The experimental vaccine of CNBG, a unit of state-owned pharmaceutical giant China National Pharmaceutical Group (Sinopharm), has entered a Phase 3 trial in the United Arab Emirates that has already recruited 15,000 volunteers

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-vaccine-sinopharm/peru-morocco-to-test-china-sinopharms-covid-19-vaccine-in-phase-3-trial-idUKKBN25H08Q>

China: Traces of Covid-19 found in imported frozen food

Chinese authorities say the virus was found in imported shipments of frozen food, one of which came from Brazil. According to local Chinese authorities, traces of Covid-19 have been found in shipments of imported frozen food in two Chinese cities, Reuters reports. A shipment of frozen chicken wings, imported from Brazil into the southern city of Shenzhen, tested positive for the virus when it was sampled. Reuters reports that Shenzhen authorities identified the chicken as originating from a plant owned by Aurora, Brazil's third-largest poultry and pork exporter. China has not formally notified Brazilian authorities about the alleged Covid-19 that was found on the frozen wings.

<https://www.poultryworld.net/Meat/Articles/2020/8/China-Traces-of-Covid-19-found-in-imported-frozen-food-629464E/>

Argentina joins Chinese coronavirus vaccine trial, maker says

Argentina joined Peru, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates in approving Phase 3 clinical trials for a coronavirus vaccine developed by China National Biotec Group (CNBG), the company said late

Friday. As China forges ahead in the global race to develop a vaccine to curb the COVID-19 pandemic and as cases within China dwindle, CNBG needs research participants from other countries for testing. Phase 3 trials, which usually involve several thousand participants, allow researchers to gather data on the efficacy of potential vaccines for final regulatory approvals. CNBG will partner with Argentina's ELEA in the vaccine trial, the Chinese company said in a statement late Friday.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-vaccine-sinopharm/argentina-joins-chinese-coronavirus-vaccine-trial-maker-says-idUKKBN25I0CZ>

China already using Covid-19 vaccine candidate on key workers, official says

Border officials and health workers among first to get jabs as they are more likely to get infected, government adviser Zheng Zhongwei says. Scheme will later be rolled out to include people working in the transport and service sectors and at wet markets, he says

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3098505/coronavirus-china-has-been-using-covid-19-vaccine-candidate-key>

China approves human testing for coronavirus vaccine grown in insect cells

China has approved human testing for a potential coronavirus vaccine cultivated within insect cells, local government in the southwestern city of Chengdu said on Saturday. China is in a global race to develop cost-effective vaccines to curb the COVID-19 pandemic. Using insect cells to grow proteins for the coronavirus vaccine - a first in China - could speed up large-scale production, the city government of Chengdu said in a notice on social media WeChat. The vaccine, developed by West China Hospital of Sichuan University in Chengdu, has received approval from the National Medical Products Administration to enter a clinical trial, the notice said.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-vaccine-china/china-approves-human-testing-for-coronavirus-vaccine-grown-in-insect-cells-idUKKBN25I0GA>

Doctors issue warning over 'rushed' coronavirus vaccine which may have 'dangerous' side-effects

Doctors warn coronavirus vaccine testing is rushed and can't guarantee safety Vaccines normally take up to 15 years to approve, the average is 10 years Pharmaceutical giants race to be the first with a covid vaccine in under 2 years Australians could face being banned from work or travelling for refusing jab Doctors warn the government not to make the 'rushed' vaccine compulsory More than 100 vaccine candidates studied worldwide, at least 10 in clinical trials

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8655523/Doctors-issue-warning-rushed-coronavirus-vaccine-dangerous-effects.html>

Children over 12 should wear face masks to combat Covid, says WHO

The World Health Organization says children aged 12 and over should wear masks to help tackle the pandemic. Masks should be worn when 1-metre distancing cannot be guaranteed and there is widespread transmission, it advised. It is the first time the WHO has issued guidance on masks for children and comes less than two weeks before pupils in England return to school. Although a small number of schools - including James Gillespie's high school in Edinburgh and Eaton Mill primary school in Milton Keynes - have said they will require children to wear masks, the government says that masks are "not recommended" for primary or secondary school children.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/22/children-should-wear-face-masks-to-combat-covid-says-who>

UK's top medical officers defend opening schools

Britain's top medical officers say children are more likely to be harmed by staying away from school than from being exposed to the coronavirus. England's chief medical officer on Sunday joined his counterparts in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales in saying that children are less likely to contract the virus than adults and have "an exceptionally low risk" of dying from the coronavirus. By

contrast, they said studies show that not going to school limits children's ability to succeed in life and may worsen physical and mental health problems. "Very few, if any, children or teenagers will come to long-term harm from the coronavirus due solely to attending school," they said in a statement. "This has to be set against a certainty of long-term harm to many children and young people from not attending school."

<https://www.thestandard.com.hk/breaking-news/section/6/153699/UK%E2%80%99s-top-medical-officers-defend-opening-schools>

Mexico exploring phase 3 trials of Russian coronavirus vaccine

Mexico told Moscow on Wednesday it would like to carry out phase 3 testing of Russia's coronavirus vaccine, as part of the Latin American country's intensifying efforts to secure early supplies of an effective medicine to control the pandemic. After a meeting with Russia's ambassador to Mexico, Viktor Koronelli, Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard said on Twitter he had expressed interest in carrying out large scale human trials "to have the vaccine as soon as possible in Mexico." Russia has already produced the first batch of its new vaccine, giving approval before trials that would normally involve thousands of participants. Such phase 3 trials are usually considered essential precursors for a vaccine to secure regulatory approval. The race to produce a vaccine has become a contest for influence and prestige among major powers, while developing economies are trying to ensure a fair distribution of the medicines.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-mexico-russia/mexico-exploring-phase-3-trials-of-russian-coronavirus-vaccine-idUKKCN25F2ML>

Coronavirus: New Zealand looks to use saliva tests as part of Covid-19 fight

A test to diagnose Covid-19 using saliva is being looked at as a potential player in New Zealand's fight against the pandemic. Auckland Dr Anne Wyllie, based at the Yale School of Public Health in Connecticut, led research which found saliva samples may be more sensitive to detecting Covid-19 than the invasive "gold standard" nasal swab tests. This week, a saliva test developed by Wyllie's team - dubbed SalivaDirect - was granted Emergency Use Authorisation by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), making it immediately available to other labs that want to start using it.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/300087323/coronavirus-new-zealand-looks-to-use-saliva-tests-as-part-of-covid19-fight>

Coronavirus vaccine to go on sale in December, claims China

China's coronavirus vaccine will be available to buy in December, the company developing it has said. The state-owned China National Pharmaceutical Group Corporation said the vaccine is currently undergoing its third and final trial. Two shots of the vaccine will cost less than 1,000 yuan (about £110) and will be completely effective, company president Liu Jingzhen said.

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/china-coronavirus-vaccine-sale-december-a4527891.html>

A Chinese company says its vaccine will be ready by December—but it won't be cheap

Sinopharm, a state-owned Chinese pharmaceutical company, says that its COVID-19 vaccine will reach market by December, but its likely price tag is much higher than any put forward for a coronavirus vaccine so far. "It is expected to cost a few hundred yuan for a shot, and for two shots it should be less than 1000 yuan (\$145)," Sinopharm CEO Liu Jingzhen, told a Chinese newspaper this week. Liu said that the cost is "not very high," but, in fact, it's significantly more expensive than the projected prices of its peers.

<https://fortune.com/2020/08/22/china-covid-vaccine-sinopharm-price-cost/>

A Covid-19 vaccine from insects: China rolls out tests

China has approved human testing for a potential coronavirus vaccine cultivated within insect cells, local government in the southwestern city of Chengdu said on Saturday. China is in a global race to develop cost-effective vaccines to curb the Covid-19 pandemic. Using insect cells to grow proteins

for the coronavirus vaccine - a first in China - could speed up large-scale production, the city government of Chengdu said in a notice on social media WeChat. The vaccine, developed by West China Hospital of Sichuan University in Chengdu, has received approval from the National Medical Products Administration to enter a clinical trial, the notice said. When tested on monkeys, the vaccine was shown to prevent Sars-CoV-2 infections with no obvious side-effects, the notice added.

<https://www.khaleejtimes.com/coronavirus-pandemic/a-covid-19-vaccine-from-insects-china-rolls-out-tests->

Dr Anthony Fauci tells Australia and the world they will defeat COVID-19

Dr Anthony Fauci appears in first Australian interview on 60 Minutes on Sunday. He shares a message of hope saying the world will defeat the killer coronavirus 'We're going to get out of this. We're going to end this guaranteed,' Dr Fauci said.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8653837/Dr-Anthony-Fauci-tells-Australia-world-defeat-COVID-19.html>

Covid-19 strain in Qatar is similar to China, India and Philippines

The representative Covid-19 strain in Qatar is very similar to the strains found in Guangdong (China), Philippines and India, according to an analysis by two officials from Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU). Expressing their views in their personal capacity, Dr Mounir Hamdi, dean of the College of Science and Engineering, Dr Tanvir Ala, an assistant professor at the college noted that although these countries do not share a geographical border with Qatar, there are many expats from China, Philippines, and India who are residents of Qatar. According to their analysis, "Though Qatar's initial case was reported from Iran, subsequent cases might have originated from these countries. Our estimated phylogenetic tree places the representative strain of Qatar very close to England, Hong Kong, and Wales as well. Interestingly, strains from other Gulf countries were under the same clade of the phylogenetic tree but proved quite far from the clade of the representative strain of Qatar."

<https://www.gulf-times.com/story/671285/Covid-19-strain-in-Qatar-is-similar-to-China-India>

Pfizer, BioNTech eye October approval for mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccine

Pfizer and BioNTech have revealed additional data from a phase 1 study of two of its COVID-19 vaccine candidates, as well as their plans to potentially seek regulatory approval by October this year. At the beginning of July, Pfizer/BioNTech revealed early positive data from their mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccine programme. Those results demonstrated that one of the candidates, BNT162b1, generated promising dose-dependent immunogenicity. However, the companies somewhat surprised commentators when they announced that another candidate, BNT162b2, had been selected for a large-scale, phase 3 clinical trial. In additional data shared today, Pfizer/BioNTech posted the results from all 332 participants tested with the two mRNA-based candidates, BNT162b1 or BNT162b2, to clarify their decision.

http://www.pmlive.com/pharma_news/pfizer_biontech_eye_october_approval_for_mrna-based_covid-19_vaccine_1347163

Thailand Seeks Local Production Rights to Oxford's Covid Vaccine

Thailand is looking to secure access to a Covid-19 vaccine candidate being developed by University of Oxford through an agreement which would give the Southeast Asian nation the technology rights for local production. "We're in the process of finalizing our letter of intent to cooperate with the Oxford vaccine research team," Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said on Friday. "Once that process is done, I'll sign it right away."

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-08-21/thailand-seeks-local-production-rights-to-oxford-s-covid-vaccine>

UK's cheap food could fuel Covid-19 spread, says WHO envoy

Britain's demand for cheap food could be fuelling the spread of the coronavirus in factories, a leading health expert has warned, as analysis shows nearly 1,500 cases across the UK. Cramped

conditions in some factories and in low-paid workers' homes, spurred by the UK's desire for cheaply produced food, may have driven infection rates in the sector, according to David Nabarro, a World Health Organization special envoy on Covid-19. In the early stages of the pandemic, the UK avoided the scale of Covid-19 outbreaks seen in meat factories and other food processing plants in countries such as the US. But a Guardian analysis suggests that reported UK outbreaks of the disease are now increasing in frequency, with examples of cases spreading into the wider community.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/21/uk-cheap-food-could-fuel-covid-19-spread-says-who-envoy>

Russia's Vektor COVID-19 vaccine to complete clinical trial in September - RIA

The clinical trial of a Russian COVID-19 vaccine being developed by the Siberian Vektor research centre is due to be completed in September, the RIA news agency cited Russia's healthcare watchdog as saying on Friday.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/russias-vektor-covid-19-vaccine-080215499.html>

China giving experimental coronavirus vaccines to high-risk groups since July, says official

China has been giving experimental coronavirus vaccines to groups facing high infection risks since July, a health official told state media. No vaccine has yet passed final, large-scale trials to prove it is safe and effective enough to protect people from contracting the virus that has led to almost 800,000 deaths worldwide. The aim is to boost the immunity of specific groups of people, including medical workers and those who work at food markets and in the transportation and service sectors, Zheng Zhongwei, a National Health Commission official, told state TV in an interview aired late on Saturday. Authorities could consider modestly expanding the emergency use programme to try to prevent possible outbreaks during the autumn and winter, added Zheng, who heads the Chinese government-led team that coordinates state resources for coronavirus vaccine development.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-vaccine-china/china-giving-experimental-coronavirus-vaccines-to-high-risk-groups-since-july-says-official-idUKKBN2510J7>

New Zealand's renewed COVID crisis: Why scientists say the virus is hard to contain

New Zealand -- once the world's COVID recovery darling, applauded internationally for its lockdown and apparent quashing of the pandemic coronavirus -- is now facing a fresh cluster of cases. After the country's recent celebration of 100 days without any documented coronavirus cases, scientists say New Zealand's latest COVID-19 resurgence is shedding new light on how the virus is spread and why it's so hard to contain. While the cause of the outbreak is still being investigated, experts say it's possible the virus has been there all along. "Just because there are no reported cases, that doesn't mean there aren't any," said Dr. Dan Barouch, director of the Center for Virology and Vaccine Research at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. "There could be asymptomatic cases existing and spreading without any actually being detected."

<https://abcnews.go.com/Health/zealands-renewed-covid-crisis-scientists-virus-hard/story?id=72420563>

Blood Plasma Treatment for Covid-19 Now on Hold at F.D.A.

Last week, just as the Food and Drug Administration was preparing to issue an emergency authorization for blood plasma as a Covid-19 treatment, a group of top federal health officials including Dr. Francis S. Collins and Dr. Anthony S. Fauci intervened, arguing that emerging data on the treatment was too weak, according to two senior administration officials. The authorization is on hold for now as more data is reviewed, according to H. Clifford Lane, the clinical director at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. An emergency approval could still be issued in the near future, he said. Donated by people who have survived the disease, antibody-rich plasma is considered safe. President Trump has hailed it as a "beautiful ingredient" in the veins of people who have survived Covid-19.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/19/us/politics/blood-plasma-covid-19.html>

Brazil greenlights human trials for J&J's potential COVID-19 vaccine

Brazil approved on Tuesday human clinical trials for a potential COVID-19 vaccine developed by Johnson & Johnson, the fourth candidate to trial in the Latin American country that has become key to the global race for a vaccine. Health regulator Anvisa said it had given the green light to the study which will see 6,000 people in Brazil volunteer to trial the vaccine contender of Johnson & Johnson's pharmaceutical subsidiary Janssen. With the world's biggest coronavirus outbreak outside the United States, Brazil has become a hub for mass clinical trials of potential vaccines. Brazilian officials have vowed to start producing British and Chinese vaccines within a year, but experts warn it may take at least twice as long.

<https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/brazil-approves-human-trials-potential-123510423.html>

Sinopharm chief says COVID-19 vaccine will cost less than \$145 for 2-dose regimen

The head of China's state-owned Sinopharm has put forward a general price range for the group's two inactivated COVID-19 vaccine candidates now in late-stage development—and it's quite a bit higher than the amounts other shot makers have quoted so far. "An inactivated vaccine won't be priced too high," Sinopharm Chairman Liu Jingzhen told state media Guangming Daily (Chinese). "It's expected to cost a couple hundred yuan for one shot, and it would be less than 1,000 yuan (\$145) for two doses." It's not immediately clear what price Liu was referring to—the out-of-pocket cost or list price. And it's not yet certain whether Beijing will help cover some of the costs for a pandemic vaccine developed by a state-run company.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/vaccines/china-sinopharm-chief-narrows-down-covid-19-vaccine-price-to-within-145-for-2-dose-regimen>

Coronavirus Resurgence

Mexico reports 'catastrophic' 60,000 Covid-19 deaths

Mexico has surpassed its "catastrophic" worst-case scenario of 60,000 Covid-19 deaths and is shaping up as one of the worst health and economic casualties of the global pandemic. Latin America's second-biggest economy, which has the world's third highest overall coronavirus death toll, hit the grim milestone on Saturday, when the health ministry reported 60,254 and 556,216 confirmed cases. But officials have long acknowledged that the government's data is an underrepresentation and the health ministry and private studies say the real death tally could be some three times higher.

<https://www.ft.com/content/fc83004a-769f-49b3-9f7c-9d5fd840d31f>

Italy Lockdown Success Challenged by New Europe Virus Surge

After suffering one of Europe's earliest and fiercest outbreaks, Italy emerged as an unlikely role model for its handling of the pandemic. The country managed to reduce infections dramatically in June and July after two months of strict lockdown, while its fatality rate, once one of the world's highest, fell to a handful per day. The White House's coronavirus response coordinator Deborah Birx and top infectious-disease expert Anthony Fauci both praised the country's response in recent days.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-08-23/italy-s-lockdown-success-challenged-by-new-european-virus-surge>

France reports post-lockdown daily record of 4,897 new COVID-19 cases

France reported 4,897 new coronavirus infections over the past 24 hours on Sunday, the highest daily level since the end of a two-month lockdown in May. Health Minister Olivier Veran warned earlier that the situation was risky, and said infections were essentially happening among 20 to 40 year-olds at parties. Cases among older people were starting to rise too, Veran said, but he ruled out another total lockdown in France. Sunday's health ministry figures showed the number of people in hospital edged down by two to 4,709 from the previous day, however. Three more people were registered in intensive care, taking that total to 383.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-france-casualties/france-reports-post-lockdown-daily-record-of-4897-new-covid-19-cases-idUKKBN25J0NB>

Alarm across Europe over surge in coronavirus cases

A sharp rise in the number of coronavirus infections over the past two weeks has put European governments on high alert as holidaymakers return home to big cities and teachers and pupils prepare for the start of the school year after months of disruption. But leaders are eager to avoid reimposing drastic controls on freedom of movement because they want to allow economies to recover from the deepest recession since the second world war. France has opted to control the spread of the virus rather than attempt to eliminate it completely, and French president Emmanuel Macron has said there is no such thing as a “zero risk” society.

<https://www.ft.com/content/25da4c31-f79a-4aa2-a9c9-a5c31546e5df>

Spain Caught Off Guard by Resurgent Coronavirus

When José Ignacio Barrasa saw the number of Covid-19 patients in his hospital rise to levels last seen in the spring, he resorted to a tactic European countries thought they had put behind them: He asked the Spanish military to build an emergency field hospital. “The outbreak was a complete surprise. We didn’t expect it so soon,” says Dr. Barrasa, the director of the University Clinic Hospital in Zaragoza. Coronavirus infections are climbing across Europe, and Spain is at the forefront of the rebound, accounting for around one-third of the Continent’s new daily Covid-19 cases.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/spain-caught-off-guard-by-resurgent-coronavirus-11598194801>

Coronavirus: Spain witnesses fresh outbreaks and a rise in infections one week before the end of the holidays

New cases of COVID-19 in Spain have skyrocketed in practically the entire country one week before the end of the summer holidays. Some communities are doubling and even tripling the levels at which they had reached at the end of the confinement by the state of alarm. The number of cases of coronavirus cases in Spain now amount to 386,054 and deaths to 28,838. More than a third of the new infections have been detected in Madrid, so the regional government has recommended not to go out in the areas with the most positives. In addition, there are now 1,126 active outbreaks, with more than 12,400 infected, especially worrying are those located in the Segovian municipalities of Cantalejo and Carrascal del Río, where 3,400 residents have been confined for two weeks.

<https://www.euroweeklynews.com/2020/08/23/coronavirus-spain-witnesses-fresh-outbreaks-and-a-rise-in-infections-one-week-before-the-end-of-the-holidays/>

Spain reports 3,349 new coronavirus infections in past day

Spain diagnosed 3,349 new coronavirus infections in the past 24 hours, health ministry data showed on Thursday, down from 3,715 reported the previous day and bringing the cumulative total to 370,867. The ministry said 122 people had died from the coronavirus over the past seven days. The seven-day death toll reported on Wednesday was 131. The number of recorded fatalities has significantly increased since the country exited from a three-month lockdown in late June, but is far below the levels seen during the epidemic’s late-March peak when the daily toll approached 1,000.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-spain-tally/spain-reports-3349-new-coronavirus-infections-in-past-day-idUKKBN25G1Y2>

Vietnam Covid-19 death toll rises to 27

A 73-year-old woman in Da Nang with previous comorbidities has become Vietnam's 27th Covid-fatality. "Patient 577" is a resident of Lien Chieu District in the central city of Da Nang. She died of septic shock and multi-organ failure due to pneumonia caused by Covid-19, and she had a history of final-stage kidney failure, high blood pressure, heart failure, and thigh bone fracture, the Health Ministry said Sunday afternoon. The patient had suffered chronic kidney disease for eight years and had undergone dialysis twice a week for the past four years. She was treated at the Department of

Renal Medicine at the Da Nang Hospital from July 21 to 24. She also broke her leg during this period.
<https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/vietnam-covid-19-death-toll-rises-to-27-4150438.html>

Covid 19 coronavirus: Aucklanders flout level 3 restrictions in the sun

Playgrounds, skate parks and public courts are all shut in Auckland at level 3 - but you wouldn't know it from packed scenes across the city on Sunday. The City of Sails remains at alert level 3, with playgrounds and public facilities all shut. People must stay off outdoor exercise equipment, away from basketball hoops and off park benches and Government guidance urges people to stay local for exercise and recreation. But some chose to flout the rules in the sunshine on Sunday, ripping the caution tape and closed signs off local playgrounds and skate parks.

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12358843

Covid 19 coronavirus: New Auckland cases, Countdown supermarkets closed, bus passengers sought

Two West Auckland supermarkets closed, a hunt began for several bus passengers and six new cases of Covid-19 were announced in Auckland - the source of two last night still under investigation - in the latest developments yesterday. It comes as Aucklanders wait anxiously for Cabinet's big decision tomorrow and whether they will be released from alert level-3 lockdown from 11.59pm this Wednesday. Nine of those infected in a growing community cluster first identified on August 11, and leading to a level 3 lockdown in Auckland and level 2 across the rest of New Zealand, are in hospital, including three in intensive care. There are 111 active cases of Covid-19 in New Zealand, 16 of which are imported. Countdown Te Atatū South and Countdown LynnMall supermarkets closed yesterday afternoon for cleaning after it was revealed a person later found to have Covid-19 visited both.

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12358735

Coronavirus: New Zealand got caught out by the 'euphoria' of beating Covid-19

After being described by the New York Times and Daily Mail as being the “envy of the world”, New Zealand well and truly fell off its pedestal with the alert levels changing after the discovery of community transmission. Gorman said New Zealand was not prepared for such a fall, as queues once again formed at supermarkets, panic buying resumed, health centre phone lines and inboxes were clogged with Covid-19 test requests, and medical staff were hassled and abused for their sudden sluggishness which did not exist the day before. The air felt heavy again as New Zealand, like the rest of the world, continued with the battle. “Our tendency to keep telling ourselves how well we had done left us poorly placed the second time around,” Gorman said.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/122530826/coronavirus-new-zealand-got-caught-out-by-the-euphoria-of-beating-covid19>

Mexico nears somber coronavirus milestone even as signs of hope emerge

Standing in a graveyard on the outskirts of Mexico City decked out in a cowboy hat to cover his rugged features from the sun, guitar player Eberardo Vargas this week had fewer funerals to play at than he has for most of the coronavirus pandemic. Even as Mexico passes a grim new milestone in its battle with the pandemic - 60,000 fatalities - signs of relief are beginning to emerge in the country that has registered more dead than any other bar the United States and Brazil. Vargas, 49, said May, June and July were the busiest months he could recall as a musician as mourners in the municipality of Ecatepec northeast of Mexico City paid him and his band to hear favorite songs of lost loved-ones during their last goodbyes.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-mexico-slowdown/mexico-nears-somber-coronavirus-milestone-even-as-signs-of-hope-emerge-idUKKBN25I0QF?il=0>

Think national, act local: localities gear up for Covid-19 fight

With Vietnam looking to avoid repeating an economically bruising nationwide social distancing

period to curb Covid-19, localities have stepped up to the plate. After going over three months without a single community transmission of the novel coronavirus, Vietnam has found itself grappling with a second wave of infections since July 25, when one case was detected in the central city of Da Nang. What began as a single, isolated case exploded into outbreaks in 14 other cities and provinces. In less than a month, over 500 new local transmissions were recorded, all associated with Da Nang, which has become the epicenter of Vietnam's second wave of Covid-19 infections.

<https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/think-national-act-local-localities-gear-up-for-covid-19-fight-4148631.html>

Over 40 Berlin schools report Covid-19 cases a fortnight after reopening

Coronavirus cases have been reported by at least 41 schools in Berlin, barely two weeks after the German capital's 825 schools reopened. Cases are rising across Europe, including in Spain, which registered 66,905 in the past two weeks, resulting in the continent's highest 14-day infection rate and warnings over the risk of a new wave of deaths. The Berlin experience echoes that in some states in the US, including Georgia, and in Israel, which have recorded clusters tied to schools. According to reports in Berlin, all age groups have been affected, including in elementary schools, high schools and trade schools. Berlin was one of the first places in Germany to reopen its schools after the summer holidays.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/europe/over-40-berlin-schools-report-covid-19-cases-a-fortnight-after-reopening-1.4336773>

France Reports 3,602 New Coronavirus Cases in Past 24 Hours

France reported 3,602 new Covid-19 cases over the past 24 hours as infections climb across Europe. While Saturday's figure was lower than the 4,586 new cases the government's health office reported on Friday and the four-month record the previous day, the number is still above levels since May. Despite the rising case numbers, fatalities remain well below those earlier this year. Deaths increased by nine to 30,512 in the past 24 hours. France and its neighbors are grappling with a pickup in infections as people travel for vacations and attend summer gatherings. Officials are tightening measures to curb the spread but are reluctant to resort to the sweeping closures imposed during the initial peak of the pandemic in March and April.

<https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/france-reports-3-602-new-coronavirus-cases-in-past-24-hours-1.1483858>

Italy Back to Lockdown Figures as COVID-19 Cases Top 1,000 in 24 hours

Italy's cases spike as infections exceed 1,000 for the first time since lockdown eased. The rise has been blamed on large gatherings caused by holidays and nightlife after a number of infections were found in returning travellers.

<https://www.euroweeklynews.com/2020/08/22/italy-back-to-lockdown-figures-as-covid-19-cases-top-1000-in-24-hours/>

Bus trips taken by infectious Covid-19 cases in Auckland identified

A number of further bus journeys taken by two infectious Covid-19 cases in Auckland have been identified. The case linked to the Auckland cluster took the 670 bus on 10 August along a route through Mt Roskill to Otahuhu and then later between Otahuhu and Avondale. The St Lukes worker also took buses on three days after alert level 3 on 14, 15 and 17 August, travelling the same bus 22 route between Symonds St and St Lukes. Both cases also took the 22-N on 12 August.

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/424241/bus-trips-taken-by-infectious-covid-19-cases-in-auckland-identified>

Brazil registers 50,032 new cases of coronavirus, 892 deaths in 24 hours

Brazil reported 50,032 new cases of the novel coronavirus and 892 deaths from the disease caused by the virus in the past 24 hours, the health ministry said on Saturday. Brazil has registered 3,582,362 cases of the virus since the pandemic began, while the official death toll from COVID-19 has risen to 114,250, according to ministry data from the world's worst coronavirus outbreak outside the United States.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-brazil/brazil-registers-50032-new-cases-of-coronavirus-892-deaths-in-24-hours-idUKKBN2510RZ>

Vietnam's coronavirus infections pass 1,000 mark

Vietnam's tally of coronavirus infections since January passed the 1,000 mark on Thursday, after 14 new cases were reported. More than half of the total confirmed cases are linked to a new outbreak that began late last month in the central coastal city of Danang, the health ministry said. Vietnam's tally now stands at 1,007 infections and 25 deaths, among the lowest in the region, having successfully contained earlier outbreaks. The ministry said 86,644 people are currently undergoing quarantine, most in their homes.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-vietnam/vietnams-coronavirus-infections-pass-1000-mark-idUKKBN25G188>

New Lockdown

Coronavirus: 27 swabs for nearly 4000 people on Ruby Princess cruise- how NZ was put at risk

Twenty-seven swabs. That was New Zealand's Covid-19 frontline barrier against the 3795 people on the Ruby Princess as it made its way to our shores. Of the many remarkable findings in the 320-page report by the Special Commission of Inquiry into the Ruby Princess, the most concerning is the near total reliance New Zealand had on New South Wales Health and cruise ship company Carnival Cruises to protect us from the threat of Covid-19. Both failed to do their jobs. And while neither could be said to be responsible for the passengers spreading the virus here, the paucity of checks and monitoring raises serious questions about their actions and what needs to change when the indefinite ban on cruise ships is lifted.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/300086383/coronavirus-27-swabs-for-nearly-4000-people-on-ruby-princess-cruise-how-nz-was-put-at-risk>

New Zealand defers lockdown decision as it reports new COVID-19 cases

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern on Friday deferred a decision on whether to ease a lockdown on the city of Auckland as 11 new coronavirus infections were reported, including nine cases of community transmission. New Zealand's biggest city was placed in lockdown earlier this month until Aug. 26 amid a spike in new cases, forcing businesses to close and schools to shut. Ardern said after a review of the lockdown that there was no need to change any settings at this stage, and promised to review them again on Monday. "We have made good progress. Unlike our first lockdown we are not dealing with multiple outbreaks," she said at a news conference. "There is nothing to suggest we need change our course and certainly nothing that suggests that we need to escalate our response."

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-new-zealand/new-zealand-defers-lockdown-decision-as-it-reports-new-covid-19-cases-idUKKBN25H05B>

Madrid advises residents to stay at home as virus cases soar

Authorities in Madrid on Friday advised residents in areas with a high level of coronavirus cases to stay at home as the Spanish health ministry reported more than 3,000 new infections for the fourth day running. The country logged 3,650 coronavirus infections in the past 24 hours, bringing the cumulative total to 386,054. With 1,199 infections, Madrid accounted for nearly a third of the new cases. The region's deputy health chief, Antonio Zapatero, urged people to avoid unnecessary trips and meetings, and said those in the worst-hit areas should stay at home, though he ruled out any mandatory confinement for now. "Although we're worried, I don't think the situation merits targeted lockdowns," he told reporters.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-spain/spain-daily-coronavirus-infections-rise-to-3650-idUKKBN25H24Y>

Spanish Government Considers the Possibility of Returning to Phase 2 Mobility Restrictions

The government is seriously considering proposing a return to phase 2 of a restriction of movement in order to stop the spread of the virus across Spain. The worsening of the coronavirus pandemic in Spain has prompted Pedro Sánchez to consider the possibility of implementing mobility restrictions in the autonomous communities, similar to those of Phase 2, but without having to decree a state of alarm, say sources from various regional governments. If there is no noticeable change in the current trend of the data - which this Friday amounted to more than 3,600 infections in a single day - Spain could take steps back in its 'new normal' and return, according to the same sources, to "similar situations to those of Phase 2 ", although mobility limitations would be limited to the community and not on a provincial level.

<https://www.euroweeklynews.com/2020/08/23/spanish-government-considers-the-possibility-of-returning-to-phase-2-mobility-restrictions/>