COVID-19 Lockdown Exit Analysis
18th Nov 2020

News Highlights

Lockdown imposed in Canada's remote Nunavut after community outbreak of Covid-19

Health officials have warned of a new coronavirus outbreak in Canada's remote territory of Nunavut and closed all non-essential services as well as schools for at least the next two weeks. This is especially concerning because healthcare services are limited in Canada's northern territories and the virus spreads quicker with numerous people living under the same roof.

France first country in Europe to top two million coronavirus cases

France has recorded more than two million Covid-19 cases, the first country in Europe to do so, even as the lockdown imposed on October 30 has led to a sharp decline in new infections. More than 45,000 people have died of the coronavirus in France alone and the nation stands fourth in the list of countries with the most infections after the U.S., India and Brazil.

More U.S. states impose restrictions as pandemic rages on

More than 11 million people have now been infected with Covid-19 in the U.S. and more and more states are now imposing restrictions to fight the virus that has killed close to 250,000 people in the country alone. High schools and colleges will halt on-site teaching in Michigan and indoor restaurant dining will be banned in Washington State and California. The country has been reporting an average of 150,000 cases a day over the last week with hospital admissions reaching record levels.

Bharat Biotech announces phase three trials of vaccine made in India

Hyderabad-based company, Bharat Biotech, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has announced the start of phase three clinical tirals of its vaccine, Covaxin, with about 26,000 participants. The company said that Covaxin has shown promising safety and immunogenicity data in phase one and two of the trials.

Lockdown Exit

China clamps down on frozen food over coronavirus fears

China is zeroing in on cold chain goods to prevent any outbreaks of Covid-19 after packaging of frozen Argentine beef, German pork and Indian cuttlefish tested positive for the virus. Cities across China, the world’s largest importer of beef and pork, have pledged to strengthen screening and sterilisation of imports. The latest campaign to safeguard China’s borders against any reintroduction of Covid-19 began after officials in the north-eastern city of Tianjin, one of the country’s largest ports, tied an infection of a worker in a warehouse to frozen pork imports from Germany last week. In the following days, food packaging tested positive for coronavirus in cities ranging from eastern Jining to southern Xiamen and central Zhengzhou.
https://www.ft.com/content/4efc158c-7482-4141-aa20-183a7de7fd59

Wash hands, use the app and avoid a Christmas lockdown

As 2020's finishing post shuffles into view, a casual query among friends about what they fear the most in the lead up to Christmas elicits a unanimous, reflexive response. Lockdown. A regional or nationwide Level 3 or 4 plunge, right on the holiday doorstep, knocking the stuffing out of your Christmas turkey. Hopefully, the spectre of such bad tidings won't play out, but it's clear that we still have many months of maintaining our heightened defensive posture in repelling the menace of this pandemic from taking root in the community.
https://www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/christmas/300159515/wash-hands-use-the-app-and-avoid-a-christmas-lockdown

Insurers are trying to escape COVID-19 liability, watchdog tells UK Supreme Court
Insurers are trying to escape liability for pandemic-related business losses with counter-intuitive arguments that go against the essential purpose of insurance, Britain's markets watchdog told the UK Supreme Court on Tuesday. A lawyer for the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), which brought a test case against insurers on behalf of policyholders, said insurers had reached an "extraordinary conclusion" that business losses were largely uncovered during the coronavirus pandemic because of the widespread havoc it has caused. "(Insurers) are saying: 'We insure perils but not ones that are going to cost us a huge amount of money. We never contemplated that'. Well, that isn't an answer," Colin Edelman, the FCA's lawyer, told the second day of a four-day appeal, watched by thousands of businesses brought to their knees during the pandemic.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-insurers-court/insurers-are-trying-to-escape-covid-19-liability-watchdog-tells-uk-supreme-court-idUKKBN27X2LM

Watchdog criticises UK government for COVID procurement amid 'chumocracy' claims
The British government did not properly document key decisions nor was it open enough about billions of pounds of contracts handed out during the COVID-19 pandemic, its spending watchdog has said, as critics accuse ministers of running a "chumocracy". The National Audit Office (NAO) said on Wednesday there had been a lack of transparency and a failure to explain why certain suppliers were chosen, or how any conflict of interest was dealt with, over 18 billion pounds in procurement deals made between March and the end of July, often with no competition. The report comes amid growing criticism some multi-million pound contracts were awarded during the coronavirus crisis to companies with links to ministers, lawmakers and officials. "While we recognise that these were exceptional circumstances, it remains essential that decisions are properly documented and made transparent if government is to maintain public trust that taxpayers' money is being spent appropriately and fairly," NAO head Gareth Davies said.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-britain-procuremen/watchdog-criticises-uk-government-for-covid-procurement-amid-chumocracy-claims-idUKKBN27Y00D

How bad is Russia's Covid crisis? Packed morgues and excess deaths tell a darker story than official numbers suggest
The limbs of a lifeless body hang off a stretcher in a hospital ward as coronavirus patients battle for their lives just a few feet away. An elderly woman gasps for breath, her desperate panting a grim soundtrack to one of many disturbing cell-phone videos emerging from hospitals across Russia. "This is how our nights look: horrifying," says a male voice narrating the footage, given to CNN by a prominent opposition-linked Russian doctors' union, "Doctors' Alliance," which says it was recorded in mid-October by a hospital staff member in Ulyanovsk, a city around 500 miles east of Moscow. "Two more down in our ward," he says, while filming a corpse. "This is how Covid-19 is killing everybody."
https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/17/europe/russia-coronavirus-pandemic-excess-deaths-intl/index.html

Exit Strategies

England's national lockdown should end on 2 December - but what happens next?
With Christmas fast approaching, all eyes are fixed on the UK government to see if the second

national lockdown - introduced to control the spread of Covid - will end in December. It has nearly been two weeks since prime minister Boris Johnson introduced the latest round of restrictions to combat rising coronavirus infections and hospital admissions across England.
https://www.scotsman.com/read-this/englands-national-lockdown-should-end-2-december-what-happens-next-3038838

Will Christmas be in lockdown? What Covid restrictions might look like in the UK, according to experts

As the current end date for England's second national lockdown approaches, people's minds will be on what type of Christmas they will enjoy. Announcing the strict measures, lasting from 5 November to 2 December, Boris Johnson told the nation: "Christmas is going to be different this year, very different, but it is my sincere hope and belief that by taking tough action now, we can allow families across the country to be together."
https://inews.co.uk/news/uk/christmas-2020-lockdown-covid-restrictions-over-holidays-uk-rules-761067?ITO=msn

American, British Airways, OneWorld to trial COVID-19 tests

American Airlines, British Airways, and the oneworld alliance will launch a coronavirus testing trial this month aimed at convincing the U.S. and UK governments to introduce testing so that transatlantic travel can restart. BA was operating 84 flights per week between London Heathrow and New York JFK prior to the pandemic, but last week operated just 21. BA CEO Sean Doyle said that without a travel testing regime, Britain was being left behind countries such as Germany. Alongside its partners, BA plans to collect data from at least 500 passengers on flights from three U.S. cities to London Heathrow by asking them to take three free COVID-19 tests as part of their journey: one before departure, one on landing, and one three days after their arrival.
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-british-airways-idUSKBN27X2OS?taid=5fb42f4849698f00019c40b8&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter

COVID-19 complexities pose new challenges to govt; much depends on success and availability of vaccines

It is almost a year that the news of first case of COVID-19 in Wuhan in China became known to the world. There has been much research since than about how this virus has grown to spread as a Pandemic. There have been blames and counter blame that this has been grown in China to be used as a biological weapon. But this has not been substantiated with evidence till date. In our country first case was reported on 30th January 2020 in the state of Kerala when a student from Wuhan came back. Laxity and unpreparedness on the part of the government at that time led to several problems and increase in the number of cases.
https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/india/covid-19-complexities-pose-new-challenges-to-govt-much-depends-on-success-and-availability-of-vaccines

Partisan Exits

Germany eyes ban on anti-lockdown protest at parliament

German officials have cited security concerns in their decision to ban a series of protests planned Wednesday outside the federal parliament by people opposed to coronavirus lockdown measures. The unusual move comes amid fears that extremist groups could try to use a rally initially planned for Wednesday to attack the Bundestag, echoing an unsuccessful attempt to storm the parliament building during a similar demonstration in August. The Interior Ministry said Tuesday it had rejected 12 requests to hold rallies within a specially designated zone around parliament. Unlike elsewhere in Germany, protesters have to seek permission to stage demonstrations within the security perimeter surrounding certain federal buildings.
https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/germany-eyes-ban-anti-lockdown-protest-parliament-74251457

German officials ban anti-lockdown protest near parliament

German officials have cited security concerns in their decision to ban a series of protests planned Wednesday outside the federal parliament by people opposed to coronavirus lockdown measures. The unusual move comes amid fears that extremist groups could try to use a rally initially planned for Wednesday to attack the Bundestag, echoing an unsuccessful attempt to storm the parliament building during a similar demonstration in August. The Interior Ministry said Tuesday it had rejected 12 requests to hold rallies within a specially designated zone around parliament. Unlike elsewhere in Germany, protesters have to seek permission to stage demonstrations within the security perimeter surrounding certain federal buildings.

https://apnews.com/article/europe-berlin-germany-coronavirus-pandemic-cb2042b3cc979862d5bd9b8c3560f82a

Spanish cops raid Instagram influencers' anti-lockdown party at Marbella villa and evict 40 people

Cops called amid reports youngsters were flouting national covid restrictions Video shows mask-free influencers jumping into pool from roof of Marbella villa Spain's state of emergency limits public and private gatherings to six people

https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8956863/Spanish-cops-raid-Instagram-influencers-anti-lockdown-party-Marbella-villa-evict-40-people.html

The government must admit its errors and reset the strategy – it is time to go for 'Zero Covid'

'Zero Covid', which seeks to lock down cases rather than whole countries, has been used across East Asian and Pacific nations and has – to a large degree – succeeded in eliminating the virus

https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/zero-covid-lockdown-east-asia-pacific-b1724229.html

Questions arise over dramatic increase in PPE costs paid by government during pandemic

This programme has seen exclusive evidence of the dramatic increase in the price of PPE being paid by the government when the pandemic crisis first hit in April and May.

https://www.channel4.com/news/questions-arise-over-dramatic-increase-in-ppe-costs-paid-by-government-during-pandemic

NIH head: Masks are 'lifesaving medical instrument' not 'invasion of your personal freedom'

The head of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is urging the public to abide by safety guidelines and socially distance, saying that while recent results for COVID-19 vaccine candidates are "encouraging," people must take extra precautions for at least "a few more months." The comments from NIH director Francis Collins come as pharmaceutical companies Pfizer and Moderna recently announced that their vaccine candidates were shown to be more than 90 percent effective at preventing the coronavirus. Collins told Judy Woodruff on PBS NewsHour on Monday that he felt "extremely encouraged" by the results and said "we're pretty optimistic that we're on a good path."

https://thehill.com/homenews/news/526388-head-of-nih-masks-are-lifesaving-medical-instrument-not-invasion-of-your

Continued Lockdown

France regaining control over coronavirus but caution still needed: minister

France's health minister Olivier Veran said on Tuesday the country was regaining control over the coronavirus but was not ready to ease the second national lockdown imposed to rein in the disease. After curfew measures applied in major French cities in mid-October failed to produce the results the government had hoped for, it enforced a one-month lockdown on Oct. 30, though it was less strict than the one that ran from March 17 to May 11. "If we let up our efforts too early, if we are less

compliant with the lockdown, we might be subject to a new epidemic surge that would undo all the hard work done by the French people for several weeks," Veran told BFM TV.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france/france-regaining-control-over-coronavirus-but-caution-still-needed-minister-idUKKBN27X0MX

French lockdown set to be EXTENDED: Closures to remain beyond original December 2 deadline

National lockdown imposed on October 30 was due to run until December 2 But Health Minister confirmed today that he could no longer commit to that date Olivier Veran said this despite claiming France was past the peak on Sunday Number in hospital for Covid-19 dropped Sunday for first time since mid-August
https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8956843/amp/French-lockdown-set-EXTENDED-Closures-remain-original-December-2-deadline.html

Dutch PM to keep coronavirus lockdown measures as cases ease

Netherlands Prime Minister Mark Rutte on Tuesday said most of the country's current coronavirus lockdown measures must remain in place through mid-December, despite a recent decline in the number of new cases. "It's nice what we've achieved together," Rutte said at a press conference after health officials reported that new cases had declined 15 percent in the past week. "But if you look around in Europe, the picture is pretty sombre", he said, with most countries strengthening rather than loosening measures. Earlier on Tuesday the National Institute for Health (RIVM) said in its weekly update there were 37,706 new cases in the week to Nov. 17, the smallest number since early October.
https://in.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-netherlands/dutch-pm-to-keep-coronavirus-lockdown-measures-as-cases-ease-idUSKBN27X1SL

Germany's Merkel would have preferred tighter lockdown

The coronavirus situation in Germany is still very serious even though infection numbers are not rising so fast, Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Tuesday, after federal and state leaders postponed until Nov. 25 a decision on further lockdown measures. Merkel said she would have preferred to have agreed stricter rules at a meeting with federal and state leaders on Monday, adding she was very worried about the uncontrolled spread of coronavirus in some places, including the capital Berlin. "Infection numbers aren't growing exponentially anymore, but are still far too high. So we have to reduce contacts, reduce contacts, reduce contacts," Merkel told a business event organised by the Sueddeutsche Zeitung daily.
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-germany/germanys-merkel-would-have-preferred-tighter-lockdown-idUKKBN27X0UX

French health minister says he cannot give date for end of lockdown

French Health Minister Olivier Veran said on Tuesday he could not give a date for the end of the national lockdown. The country-wide restrictions were imposed on Oct. 30, initially for a one-month period. Veran told BFM that travel restrictions would not be lifted on Dec. 1, repeating what Prime Minister Jean Castex said last week.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france-lockdown/french-health-minister-says-he-cannot-give-date-for-end-of-lockdown-idUKKBN27X0NX

UK shopper numbers plunge as English lockdown makes impact

Total shopper numbers across British retail destinations plummeted 57.7% in the week to Nov. 14 year-on-year, reflecting the impact of England's second national lockdown, market researcher Springboard said on Monday. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland enacted new COVID-19 health restrictions last month and England began a one-month lockdown on Nov. 5 to curb a second wave of the pandemic that has left the United Kingdom with Europe's highest death toll.

https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-retail-springboard/uk-shopper-numbers-down-57-7-as-english-lockdown-hits-idUKKBN27W12R?il=0

Scientific Viewpoint

Sinovac's COVID-19 vaccine induces quick immune response - study

Sinovac Biotech's experimental COVID-19 vaccine CoronaVac triggered a quick immune response but the level of antibodies produced was lower than in people who had recovered from the disease, preliminary trial results showed on Wednesday.

https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-sinovac/sinovacs-covid-19-vaccine-induces-quick-immune-response-study-idUKKBN27Y041?il=0

Over 1 million children have been infected with COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic, report says

A new report released Monday by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Children's Hospital Association found that the coronavirus is infecting children now more than at any time during the pandemic. The number of U.S. infants, children and teens diagnosed with COVID-19 has surpassed 1 million, accounting for 11.5% of all cases in states reporting cases by age, according to the data. The total hit nearly 1.04 million kids on Nov. 12, including nearly 112,000 new cases last week. That was the highest weekly total of any previous week in the pandemic, the academy said.

https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/11/17/covid-19-over-1-million-kids-infected-study/6324129002/

Pfizer launches Covid-19 vaccine delivery trial in four US states

Pfizer has launched a pilot delivery program for its experimental Covid-19 vaccine in four US states, as the drugmaker seeks to address distribution challenges posed by its ultra-cold storage requirements. The US drugmaker said it had selected Rhode Island, Texas, New Mexico, and Tennessee for the program because of their differences in overall size, diversity of populations and immunisation infrastructure, as well as the states' need to reach individuals in varied urban and rural settings.

https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/pfizer-launches-covid-19-vaccine-delivery-trial-in-four-us-states/ar-BB1b5BbA

Covid: chemicals found in everyday products could hinder vaccine

The successful uptake of any vaccine for Covid-19, a crucial step in returning a sense of normalcy after a year ravaged by the coronavirus pandemic, could be hindered by widespread contamination from a range of chemicals used in everyday products. Small amounts of per- and polyfluoroalkyl (or PFAS) chemicals are commonly found in the bodies of people in the US, as well as several other countries. These man-made chemicals, used in everything from non-stick pans to waterproof clothes to pizza boxes, have been linked to an elevated risk of liver damage, decreased fertility and even cancer.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/17/chemicals-found-in-everyday-products-could-hinder-covid-19-vaccine

The Infection Of Hundreds Of Thousands Of Healthcare Workers Worldwide Poses A Threat To National Health Systems

A study recently published in the International Journal of Infectious Diseases from thirty-seven countries found that nearly 300,000 healthcare workers had been infected with Covid-19. In addition to the high number of infections, over 2,500 healthcare workers died from the virus as of August 15th.

https://www.forbes.com/sites/williamhaseltine/2020/11/17/the-infection-of-hundreds-of-thousands-of-healthcare-workers-worldwide-poses-a-threat-to-national-health-systems/

California scientists launch study to test whether lockdowns have impacted memory

The University of California Irvine is launching a study to examine if lockdowns and stay-at-home

orders have impacted memory. Researchers say the monotony of working from home makes it difficult to distinguish events that occur day-by-day Lockdowns have also increased isolation, which does not allow us to stimulate the brain through social interaction. Not going outside and trying to find our way home or elsewhere prevents the ability to exercise the part of the brain associated with memory and learning
https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-8957791/California-scientists-launch-study-test-lockdowns-impacted-memory.html

Coronavirus-related mental illness won't peak until mid next year, mental health expert warns

Without urgent interventions, more young people will die from pandemic-related mental ill health than coronavirus, one of the country's top mental health experts Professor Ian Hickie has warned. Around the country, all the markers of our mental health are worsening. Emergency presentations are up, helplines are running hot and incidents of self harm are increasing, but Professor Hickie, a former Mental Health Commissioner, says it's worse in Victoria. The "shadow pandemic," as he's termed it, won't peak until the second half of next year.
https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-11-17/covid-related-mental-illness-wont-peak-until-mid-next-year/12891862

Lockdown has not led to more Queensland suicides, research finds

Queensland's suicide rate did not change during lockdowns, however the pandemic contributed to a handful of people taking their own lives, research has found. The stress of pandemic lockdowns forced many people to face mental health issues for the first time, or exacerbated existing conditions.
https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/national/queensland/lockdown-has-not-led-to-more-queensland-suicides-research-finds-20201117-p56fgf.html

Covid Shots Barrel Toward Finish Line in 300-Day Science Feat

In early January, about the only thing the world's scientists knew for sure about the novel coronavirus was its genetic profile. Now, some 300 days later, vaccine developers are on the brink of a major victory against a pathogen that's inflicted untold personal and economic damage. Virus specialists including Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious disease doctor, predicted in early 2020 that it would take a year to 18 months to develop a vaccine to confront the contagion. Moderna Inc. and Pfizer Inc.'s collaboration with BioNTech SE are poised to beat that forecast if preliminary positive results from their vaccine trials hold up.
https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-17/covid-shots-barrel-toward-finish-line-in-300-day-science-feat?utm_medium=social&cmpid=socialflow-twitter-business&utm_source=twitter&utm_campaign=socialflow-organic&utm_content=business

J&J expects data for U.S. authorization of COVID-19 vaccine by February, says head scientist

Johnson & Johnson's chief scientist said the drugmaker is recruiting over 1,000 people per day for the late-stage trial of its experimental COVID-19 vaccine and expects to have all the data needed to seek U.S. authorization by February or earlier. "By the end of the year or around the end of the year, we should have 60,000 people in the study," Dr. Paul Stoffels, J&J's chief scientific officer, said in an interview ahead of this week's Reuters Total Health conference. "And efficacy endpoint should be there in the first few weeks or months, January or February, of the new year," he added.
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-johnson-johnson-idUSKBN27X2R7?taid=5fb43c4d5ee68d0001b51b30&utm_campaign=trueAnthem:+Trending+Content&utm_medium=trueAnthem&utm_source=twitter

Roche on track to produce Regeneron's COVID-19 antibody cocktail

Roche Holding AG has completed early tests of its ability to produce large quantities of Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc's COVID-19 antibody treatment, putting it on track to begin manufacturing the

drug once it is authorised by regulators, Regeneron's president said on Tuesday. The experimental therapy was used to treat United States President Donald Trump in October. The companies aim to be able to make two million doses of the antibody cocktail next year, but are awaiting clearance from regulators.
https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2020/11/17/regeneron-roche-tested-manufacture-of-covid-drug-trump-used

Mouthwash can kill COVID-19 in 30 seconds: Study
Over-the-counter mouthwash can kill coronavirus within 30 seconds of exposure, a study has found. Scientists at Cardiff University discovered mouthwash containing at least 0.07 percent cetylpyridinium chloride (CPC) showed "promising signs" of reducing transmission of the virus. Their preliminary report, which is yet to be peer-reviewed, supports a study published last week that found mouthwash containing CPC helps in reducing the viral load of people infected with the coronavirus. It comes ahead of a clinical trial on patients at the University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff to find out whether mouthwash can reduce coronavirus in a patient's saliva. The findings are expected to be published in early 2021. Dentyl is the only UK mouthwash brand that is part of the clinical trial led by Professor David Thomas from Cardiff University.
https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/17/coronavirus-30-seconds

Coronavirus: Phase three trials of India-made vaccine begin
Phase three trials of India's first vaccine against COVID-19 has started in what is the largest human trials to be conducted with about 26,000 participants, Bharat Biotech announced on Monday. The Hyderabad-based company has been developing the vaccine, Covaxin, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) – India's premier medical research body. The first doses of the vaccine were administered to volunteers at the Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) in Hyderabad on Monday as part of the trial which will be monitored over the next year. Covaxin has shown promising safety and immunogenicity data in trials done during phase one and phase two, the company said. The India trial comes a day after the US biotech firm Moderna Inc said preliminary data from a continuing phase three study of its experimental COVID-19 vaccine showed it to be 94.5 percent effective.
https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/17/coronavirus-phase-3-trials-of-india-made-vaccine-begins

Coronavirus Resurgence

Spain reports 435 new COVID-19 deaths, new infections slow down
Spain's death toll from the coronavirus rose by 435 to 41,688 on Tuesday - the steepest daily increase in the second wave of contagion - but new infections continued to slow, health ministry data showed.
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-spain-idUSKBN27X2KW

Covid-19 in the US: Is this coronavirus wave the worst yet?
Americans may have tuned out of coronavirus news as they focused on the outcome of the presidential election, but the pandemic has quietly been getting worse in the country. The number of infections in the US has reached new heights in recent days, surpassing 160,000 cases in one day for the first time since the outbreak began. Dr Anthony Fauci, the top US infectious diseases expert, has warned that the country faces "a very challenging and ominous situation" as it approaches winter. So how bad is the situation and how much does it vary across the country?
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-54966531

Lockdowns, Round 2: A New Virus Surge Prompts Restrictions, and Pushback
California and Michigan moved to shut down indoor dining, and Philadelphia severely limited indoor gatherings. With more than 150,000 virus cases daily, the nation is shutting down again.
https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/16/us/coronavirus-lockdowns-restrictions.html

Covid: States clamp down as US cases pass 11 million mark

Michigan, Washington and California are the latest US states to bring in strict measures to try to curb the spread of Covid-19, as cases top 11 million. High schools and colleges are to halt on-site teaching while restaurants are prohibited from offering indoor dining in Michigan from Wednesday. Indoor restaurant dining is also banned in Washington State, and gyms, cinemas, theatres and museums will close. And much of California will return to its most severe restriction level. On average, more than 1,000 people a day are dying with the virus, and the overall death toll is close to 250,000. Hospital admissions have also reached record levels with nearly 150,000 new cases across the US on Monday.

https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-54955093

Lockdown U-turn in Sweden as COVID-19 cases soar and herd immunity hopes falter

Sweden, whose unorthodox pandemic strategy garnered global attention, has registered 15,084 new coronavirus cases since Friday, Health Agency statistics showed on Tuesday. The number comes after Sweden hit a new daily record of 5,990 new cases last Friday, with the number of people testing positive rising by about 50 per cent a week.

https://nationalpost.com/news/world/lockdown-u-turn-in-sweden-as-covid-19-cases-soar-and-herd-immunity-hopes-falter

Spain reports 38,273 new coronavirus cases and adds 484 victims since Friday

The coronavirus data sent by Spain's regions to the central Health Ministry showed a clear improvement on Monday, according to the daily report that is published each weekday. Compared with the data released on Friday, all Spanish territories apart from Asturias and Cantabria have registered a fall in the 14-day cumulative number of coronavirus cases per 100,000 inhabitants, one of the key indicators being used to track the progress of the epidemic.

https://english.elpais.com/society/2020-11-17/spain-reports-38273-new-coronavirus-cases-and-adds-484-victims-since-friday.html

Europe's second wave shows signs of slowing after new lockdowns

New lockdowns and tough social restrictions were reintroduced across numerous European countries in October in an effort to contain the second wave. The latest numbers suggest these steps seem to be working. Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Monday that the restrictions were causing case numbers to stabilize "somewhat, but too slowly."

https://www.cnbc.com/2020/11/17/covid-19-infections-in-europe-appear-to-slow-down-after-new-lockdowns.html

France's new daily COVID-19 infections at one-month low

French health authorities on Monday reported 9,406 new COVID-19 infections over the past 24 hours, a more than one-month low and a figure sharply down from Sunday's 27,228 and way below the all-time high of 86,852 reached on Nov 7. Health minister Olivier Veran had said earlier in the day that recent data had shown some encouraging signs from the second national lockdown - albeit lighter than the first one - put in place on Oct 30. Nonetheless, the number of people hospitalised for the new coronavirus was up by 416 to reach a new all-time high of 33,497. And COVID-19 fatalities increased by 506, to 45,054, versus a seven-day moving average of 581.

https://news.yahoo.com/frances-covid-19-hospitalisations-hit-191408978.html

'There's light at the end of tunnel': AIIMS' Randeep Guleria pins hope on COVID-19 vaccines as cases surge

With the number COVID-19 cases witnessing a surge in Delhi again, the Arvind Kejriwal government on Tuesday sought the Centre's approval to allow it to shut markets that may emerge as COVID-19 hotspots for a few days. The Delhi has already confirmed that the city is witnessing a third wave of COVID-19, adding that it has already peaked out. AIIMS director Dr Randeep Guleri, in an exclusive interaction with India TV, listed out several reasons behind the spike in coronavirus cases in the

national capital. Due to the festival season, people were seen flouting the COVID-19 protocols. Markets witnessed huge rush of people. It is quite likely that some events acted like superspreader, Dr Guleria said.
https://www.indiatvnews.com/news/india/delhi-covid-cases-aiims-randeep-guleria-lockdown-again-coronavirus-vaccine-latest-news-665481

With coronavirus cases rising in Hokkaido, is the prefecture going into a lockdown?
The northernmost island in Japan, Hokkaido is a popular destination for local and international tourists, famed for its cool summer, abundant snowfall in winter and exceptional seafood. Since last Thursday (November 12), however, the prefecture has been making headlines for its rising coronavirus cases. It reported a record 236 new Covid-19 cases on that day and a daily tally of over 200 new cases through to Sunday. Yesterday, Monday November 16, there were 189 new infections. When news of Hokkaido's upward trend in case numbers broke, there was speculation that the prefecture might be taken off the enticing Go to Travel domestic tourism campaign, which sees the government subsidising up to half of your travel costs. However, according to The Japan Times, Prime Minister Suga has said that the Go to Travel subsidy will continue as is.
https://www.timeout.com/tokyo/news/with-coronavirus-cases-rising-in-hokkaido-is-the-prefecture-going-into-a-lockdown-111720

Australia scrambles to contain new COVID-19 cluster
Australian authorities conducted mass tests on Tuesday and about 4,000 people were confined to quarantine in the hope of stifling a new cluster of cases of the novel coronavirus after hopes it had been largely eradicated. The state of South Australia reimposed social distancing restrictions on Monday after detecting 21 cases of the coronavirus, most of which were acquired locally. The cases were the first local transmissions of the virus in Australia in nine days. South Australia Premier Steven Marshall said testing had identified five new cases in the past 24 hours, while 14 people were suspected to be infected and were awaiting test results.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-australia/australia-scrambles-to-contain-new-covid-19-cluster-idUKKBN27W32E

Sask. nurses' union head pitches short-term 'circuit break' lockdown to help turn back tide of new COVID-19 cases
Saskatchewan Union of Nurses president Tracy Zambory joined CTV News at Five anchor Jeremy Dodge to explain why she thinks the province's new COVID-19 rules don't go far enough and how a novel approach taken in Australia could help stop the spread of coronavirus in Saskatchewan. This interview has been edited for length and clarity. So last week, you spoke to us here at CTV News about some of your concerns. And they proved not to be unfounded with, you know, over 400 cases of COVID-19 being confirmed on the weekend. Of course, the impact on the healthcare system has been felt by nurses and everybody on the front lines. Now, the government has taken some action, with new restrictions, what are your thoughts on where we stand?
https://saskatoon.ctvnews.ca/sask-nurses-union-head-pitches-short-term-circuit-break-lockdown-to-help-turn-back-tide-of-new-covid-19-cases-1.5192015

Jacinda Ardern refutes China's claims it found coronavirus in meat imported from New Zealand
Jacinda Ardern has hit back at claims from China that traces of coronavirus were detected in frozen meat imported from New Zealand. The Prime Minister is now seeking official clarification from China in a determined bid to get to the bottom of the matter after claims emerged from the eastern province of Shandong. Health authorities in the Chinese city of Jinan claimed coronavirus was detected on beef, tripe and product packaging from Brazil, Bolivia and New Zealand.
https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8955759/amp/Jacinda-Ardern-refutes-Chinas-claims-coronavirus-meat-impor

ted-New-Zealand.html

Learning the lessons of Covid-19

Each country is trying to find a route through winter which will disrupt life as little as possible while still safeguarding health. There's also a wish, as the UK's Prime Minister put it, to "save Christmas". And each country has a slightly different approach. Here in Switzerland the government has opted for a "slowdown" rather than a lockdown. Neighbouring France has gone into another "confinement" with strict rules around movement. To our east, Austria is beginning a "hard lockdown", with schools closed and a daytime as well as a nighttime curfew. There is increasing debate, and confusion, about which measures are most successful. In most parts of Switzerland we can still go out for dinner. Our friends in France cannot. But since the introduction of the Swiss slowdown and the French confinement, cases of Covid-19 in both countries have begun to fall

https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/learning-the-lessons-of-covid-19/46165130

Covid-19: Weak positive case confirmed to be community infection

The weak positive case reported yesterday has been confirmed as a community case, with two more cases also reported at New Zealand's border. In a statement, the Health Ministry said the weak positive result from a neighbour of this week's community case in Auckland - reported yesterday - has now had a third test that returned a positive result. "These test results indicate that this new case is a very recent infection." This case has been in the Auckland quarantine facility since 12 November, the ministry said.

https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/430657/covid-19-weak-positive-case-confirmed-to-be-community-infection

Crisis-weary Beirut residents defy new lockdown despite COVID surge

Beirut's popular Sabra market teemed with shoppers this week, some of them unmasked, in apparent defiance of a full national lockdown imposed on Saturday to stem a resurgence of coronavirus infections. The Lebanese government ordered the two-week restrictions, including a 5 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew on Sundays, as new daily infections rose above 1,000. Lebanon reported 1,016 new infections on Monday, bringing its total to 106,446 cases and 827 deaths since Feb. 21. After city streets and roads emptied on Sunday, pedestrians were back on Monday and some motorists could be seen flouting a re-imposed odd-even licence plate alternate day driving rule.

https://in.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-lebanon-lockdown/crisis-weary-beirut-residents-defy-new-lockdown-despite-covid-surge-idINKBN27X1XA?il=0

Sweden Tests Limit of Controversial Covid Strategy as Cases Soar

Sweden is bumping up against the limits of a strategy that has so far relied on recommendations rather than rules to stop people transmitting the coronavirus. The country famously avoided a lockdown earlier this year, arguing instead that citizens would voluntarily do the right thing. But this week, Prime Minister Stefan Lofven took what he called the "unprecedented" step of banning public gatherings larger than eight people, amid signs that Sweden's softer approach is falling short. On Tuesday, state epidemiologist Anders Tegnell said Swedes appear to be paying less attention to social distancing guidelines now than when the pandemic first erupted. That's despite warnings from Lofven that Sweden faces a "really dark" winter with the virus.

https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-17/sweden-tests-limit-of-controversial-covid-strategy-as-cases-soar?utm_content=business&utm_source=twitter&utm_campaign=socialflow-organic&cmpid=socialflow-twitter-business&utm_medium=social

UK Coronavirus deaths jump by 598 in highest daily rise since May 12

The UK has recorded a further 598 coronavirus deaths, the highest daily increase since May 12. It brings the total official death toll to 52,745 since the outbreak began, according to figures from the Department of Health and Social Care. Separate figures published by the UK's statistics agencies for deaths where Covid-19 has been mentioned on the death certificate, together with additional data

on deaths that have occurred in recent days, show there have now been 68,000 deaths involving Covid-19 in the UK.
https://www.standard.co.uk/news/health/uk-coronavirus-cases-deaths-latest-b72498.html?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1605644107

Tokyo to raise coronavirus alert level to highest of four levels: Nikkei
Tokyo is preparing to raise its coronavirus alert level to the highest of four levels as the number of positive cases in the Japanese capital creeps up, the Nikkei business daily reported on Wednesday. As part of the move, the metropolitan government is considering asking some businesses to shorten their hours again, the paper said, citing multiple unnamed sources. The announcement will be made on Thursday, the Nikkei said. Tokyo authorities did not immediately respond to a request for comment.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-japan/tokyo-to-raise-coronavirus-alert-level-to-highest-of-4-levels-nikkei-idUKKBN27X33W

France becomes first European country to top two million COVID-19 cases – Reuters tally
France on Tuesday became the first European country to surpass 2 million coronavirus cases despite an Oct. 30 nationwide lockdown that has led to a sharp decline in new infections, according to a Reuters tally. France is fourth in the number of infections reported, with 2,036,755, behind the United States, India and Brazil. With a death toll topping 45,000, France ranks seventh in COVID-19 deaths globally.
https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-france-record/france-becomes-first-european-country-to-top-two-million-covid-19-cases-reuters-tally-idUKKBN27X2QE

Facing a 'crisis', South Korea moves to tighten COVID-19 curbs
South Korea will tighten physical distancing rules for Seoul and its surrounding areas from Thursday, the government saying its anti-coronavirus efforts are "facing a crisis" as it works to contain increases in new cases in and around the capital. The tougher measures – including limits on public gatherings of 100 or more people as well as the numbers able to attend religious services and sporting events – will come into force on Thursday, Yonhap news agency reported.
https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/11/17/facing-a-crisis-south-korea-moves-to-tighten-covid-19-curbs

Covid Is Resurging, and This Time It's Everywhere
Pervasive spread in smaller communities fuels nationwide case record, though mortality rates are lower than in the spring. With a third surge of the Covid-19 pandemic hitting the U.S., many public-health authorities are warning the coronavirus is now so widespread that it will take pervasive new measures to contain it.
https://www.wsj.com/articles/new-covid-surge-u-s-restrictions-11605466754?mod=e2tw

New Lockdown

Teachers say Scots school closures should be on the cards as Level 4 lockdown is imposed in 11 council areas
School closures should be on the cards in the 11 local authority areas - including Glasgow - that face Scotland's toughest Covid restrictions on Friday. The level four rules will see the closure of non-essential shops, pubs, restaurants and gyms. Now the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), the country's largest teaching union, has said schools in Level Four should be allowed to implement blended or remote learning contingency measures
https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18878099.teachers-say-scots-school-closures-cards-level-4-lockdown-imposed-11-council-areas/

Italy's Covid Lockdown Empties Tourist Hotspots, Again
Italy's spring lockdown, one of the longest and strictest in Europe, gifted extraordinary experiences

and photos of the country's iconic tourist attractions devoid of people. As Italy's latest COVID rules see regional borders closing and international travel continues to be restricted, these tourist hotspots are once more emptying. The situation is bittersweet. Many businesses, particularly those dependent on tourism, wonder if they'll manage to survive a second travel hiatus.
https://www.forbes.com/sites/rebeccahughes/2020/11/17/italys-covid-lockdown-empties-tourist-hotspots-again/

Austria returns to lockdown to limit rise in Covid-19 cases
Austria will introduce a national lockdown on Tuesday in a bid to bring its soaring coronavirus infections under control, Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said on Saturday, confirming an earlier Reuters report based on a draft government decree.
https://www.france24.com/en/video/20201117-austria-returns-to-lockdown-to-limit-rise-in-covid-19-cases

Canada's remote Nunavut to impose COVID-19 lockdown after community outbreak
Canada's remote Arctic territory of Nunavut is suffering its first community outbreak of COVID-19 and will close all non-essential services, as well as schools, for at least two weeks, officials said on Monday. "This is an outbreak," Michael Patterson, Nunavut's chief public health officer, told a news conference streamed online from the territory's capital, Iqaluit. "There has been community transmission occurring in Arviat in the last little while." COVID-19 outbreaks in Canada's northern territories are particularly concerning because healthcare services are limited and because there are often numerous people living under the same roof, which facilitates the spread of the virus.
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-canada-nunavut-idUSKBN27W2RT

People living in Scotland's toughest tiers could be arrested if they try to leave: Nicola Sturgeon makes it illegal to travel outside of Level 3 and 4 lockdown areas
In Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon today announced parts of Scotland that are home to millions of people will be moved into its toughest coronavirus level at the end of the week as she warned infection rates remain 'stubbornly high'. The First Minister said 11 council areas, which include the city of Glasgow, will be subject to Level Four restrictions from 6pm on Friday. The areas have a combined population of approximately 2.3million people. People living in Level Four areas are banned from meeting with other households indoors while all non-essential shops must close.
https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8958053/Nicola-Sturgeon-announces-11-council-areas-moving-level-four.html?ito=social-twitter_dailymailUK