

# Connecting Communities for COVID19 News

## 12th Oct 2020

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### Isolation Tips

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#### **WHO says want to avoid 'punishing' coronavirus lockdowns**

The World Health Organization's top emergencies expert said on Friday that authorities should try to avoid punishing lockdowns, as many countries see a sharp rise in the number of Covid-19 infections

Read more at:

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/78579160.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/78579160.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst)

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/rest-of-world/who-says-want-to-avoid-punishing-coronavirus-lockdowns/articleshow/78579160.cms>

#### **World Mental Health Day: New Red Cross survey shows COVID-19 affecting mental health of one in two people**

Half of all respondents – 51 percent – in a seven-country survey said that the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected their mental health, an International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) survey found. In a new report – "The greatest need was to be listened to: The importance of mental health and psychosocial support during COVID-19," – the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement demonstrates how the pandemic is adding an extraordinary level of stress and suffering on communities around the world. The outbreak is worsening existing mental health conditions, triggering new ones, and making access to mental health services even more scarce. It calls for urgent and increased funding for mental health and psychosocial support within humanitarian responses.

[https://www.icrc.org/en/document/world-mental-health-day-red-cross-covid-19-mental-health-survey?utm\\_source=twitter&utm\\_medium=social&linkId=100000016123495](https://www.icrc.org/en/document/world-mental-health-day-red-cross-covid-19-mental-health-survey?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&linkId=100000016123495)

### Hygiene Helpers

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#### **Better air during China's mass lockdowns may have reduced hospital visits**

Lower levels of harmful PM2.5 particles could have resulted in an estimated 5,000 fewer hospital admissions from late January to February, study finds. Researchers also estimate there were 60,000 fewer respiratory illnesses like asthma attacks in the period

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3104741/covid-19-air-pollution-improved-during-chinas-lockdowns-and-it>

#### **Coronavirus in Africa: Five reasons why Covid-19 has been less deadly than elsewhere**

Many African countries have been praised for waging an effective campaign to combat the spread of coronavirus despite their reputation for having fragile state health systems. The continent, which has a population of more than one billion, has had about 1.5 million cases, according to data compiled by the John Hopkins University. These figures are far lower than those in Europe, Asia or the Americas, with reported cases continuing to decline. Africa has recorded about 37,000 deaths, compared with roughly 580,000 in the Americas, 230,000 in Europe, and 205,000 in Asia.

[https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54418613?fbclid=IwAR1kGEgrjbu\\_1a7w3xUF9c5NY1aLkabTKSt5zxluvBDuzVB4xqmljjiQmWA](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54418613?fbclid=IwAR1kGEgrjbu_1a7w3xUF9c5NY1aLkabTKSt5zxluvBDuzVB4xqmljjiQmWA)

#### **Coronavirus can survive for a MONTH on surfaces including banknotes and mobile phone screens**

CSIRO, Australia's science agency, found that Covid can survive up to 28 days. Research found that the virus survived better in colder temperatures. Results could improve risk mitigation procedures to prevent the disease spread

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8828459/Coronavirus-survive-MONTH-surfaces-including-banknotes-mobile-phone-screens.html>

### **Spain brings military discipline to COVID-19 contact tracing**

Various European countries have used their armies for logistical support in tackling COVID-19, but hard-hit Spain is now bringing military discipline to a process that health experts say is key in stemming the spread of the pandemic: contact tracing. At five army bases in Madrid, 150 volunteer soldiers spend their days calling people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, mapping recent social interactions, and asking those potentially infected to stay at home. "We try to impress upon them the idea that their help is vital to bringing an end to the chaos we are living through this year as soon as possible," Lt. Hector Sanchez said at the Goloso military base on the outskirts of Madrid, where he is in charge of 30 tracers.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-spain-tracers-idUKKBN26T2OS>

### **How effective 'traffic-light' systems have been in managing the coronavirus outbreak in other countries**

The coronavirus pandemic has reached a second wave, as infection rates continue to ramp up all over Europe. In England, Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham is one of the leading figures to criticise the Government's approach to local lockdowns informed by its "traffic light system" – placing the majority of the north and midlands under a raft of fresh lockdown restrictions. While the system has been met with contempt by some local leaders, it is not just the UK who have employed a traffic light-style guide to provide the public with clear messaging on the social distancing measures in place in different areas. Similar systems have been employed in France, the Canadian province of Quebec, New Zealand and Spain to name a few countries, although with varied effect.

<https://inews.co.uk/news/world/traffic-light-systems-covid-outbreak-france-spain-new-zealand-703205>

## **Community Activities**

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### **Selling flowers out of her VW Beetle helps Rio woman survive COVID-19**

You can't miss the green 1969 Volkswagen Beetle parked at the corner, orchids and ferns crowding its open bonnet, sunflowers sticking out of windows, potted plants on the roof. Turning her car into a flower shop was Valcinea Machado's survival plan after her business collapsed in the COVID-19 pandemic, and she has become a hit in Rio's Copacabana beach district. At 51, she has reinvented herself, moving from real estate to selling roses and other flowers on a busy corner.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-brazil-flowers-idUSKBN26U1OY>

### **Is COVID-19 being used as a weapon against Indigenous Peoples in Brazil?**

Today, according to the Brazil's Indigenous People Articulation, more than 27 000 Indigenous people have been infected with COVID-19, of which 806 have died from the disease (situation as of Sept 15, 2020), giving a mortality rate of 3%. This pandemic already affects 146 different Indigenous groups across the country.<sup>3</sup> On Aug 5, 2020, the Supreme Federal Court recognised the failure of the government of President Bolsonaro to deal with the effects of the epidemic on Indigenous communities.<sup>3</sup> The latter was ordered to put in place an emergency plan for the benefit of the Indigenous populations, as well as to adopt the necessary measures to remove invaders from their territories (illegal miners and loggers are not only vectors of diseases, but also cause environmental destruction, in particular through mercury pollution).<sup>4</sup> Faced with inaction from the Brazilian Government, some nations, such as the Paiter Suruí and Parque Indígena do Xingu peoples, have placed themselves in voluntary isolation since March, 2020.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)32068-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)32068-7/fulltext)

## **'There are no words': As coronavirus kills Indigenous elders, endangered languages face extinction**

The old man knew he was dying. The disease he'd been warning of for weeks had taken hold, and it wouldn't be long now. He looked to his son, who would soon be the leader of what remained of their people. The old man was fluent in five languages, but the one he chose to speak now was one that virtually no one else in the world could understand. "Awiri nuhã," Aritana Yawalapiti, 71, said in the language of the Yawalapiti, an Indigenous tribe in the Amazon rainforest. "Take care of the people. Take care of the land. Take care of the forest."

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the\\_americas/coronavirus-brazil-indigenous-endangered-language/2020/10/06/59fa1aa8-f42b-11ea-999c-67ff7bf6a9d2\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the_americas/coronavirus-brazil-indigenous-endangered-language/2020/10/06/59fa1aa8-f42b-11ea-999c-67ff7bf6a9d2_story.html)

## **Coronavirus pandemic fuels child labor in India as desperate families send kids off to work**

When India's government imposed a strict lockdown in March to try to curb coronavirus infections, Sagheer Shah, a tailor in the small town of Faizabad, had to close his shop. For three months he didn't earn a penny, burning through his savings to put food on table for his family. He was able to reopen when restrictions started easing in July, but only saw a fraction of his previous trade resume. To make ends meet, he decided to send his 14-year-old son Asif, whose school was closed anyway, hundreds of miles away to Delhi to work in a car painting shop.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/coronavirus-in-india-fuels-child-labor-as-desperate-families-send-kids-off-to-work/>

## **Working Remotely**

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### **Women bear brunt of Covid-related work stress, UK study finds**

Women are being disproportionately affected by a rise in mental health problems caused by increasing workloads as people do their jobs from home amid the pandemic. The length of the working day has increased steadily, resulting in a 49% rise in mental distress reported by employees when compared with 2017-19. Women are bearing the brunt of problems as they juggle work and childcare, according to a report by the 4 Day Week campaign and thinktanks Compass and Autonomy.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/oct/09/women-bear-brunt-of-covid-related-work-stress-uk-study-finds>

### **Microsoft is letting more employees work from home permanently**

Microsoft is allowing more of its employees to work from home permanently, the company announced Friday. While the vast majority of Microsoft employees are still working from home during the ongoing pandemic, the software maker has unveiled "hybrid workplace" guidance internally to allow for far greater flexibility once US offices eventually reopen. The Verge has received Microsoft's internal guidance, and it outlines the company's flexible working plans for the future. Microsoft will now allow employees to work from home freely for less than 50 percent of their working week, or for managers to approve permanent remote work. Employees who opt for the permanent remote work option will give up their assigned office space, but still have options to use touchdown space available at Microsoft's offices.

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/10/9/21508964/microsoft-remote-work-from-home-covid-19-coronavirus>

### **Barbados hopes a new visa will attract remote workers : The Indicator from Planet Money**

The next stage of working remotely — very remotely — starts with a Caribbean island with a problem, and an opportunity. The problem: The coronavirus pandemic has hurt countries like Barbados that rely on tourism for their economy. International tourists globally were down 65% in the first half of the year. The opportunity: With so many people discovering they could work remotely, Barbados announced the Welcome Stamp, a visa that allows people to work for their employer back home while living — and spending — in Barbados for a year.

<https://www.npr.org/2020/10/09/922479527/wfh-from-barbados>

## Virtual Classrooms

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### **What South Africa's teachers brought to the virtual classroom during Covid-19**

In South Africa, teachers have had to adapt to online learning platforms while learning how to use learning management systems during the pandemic. Before the pandemic, many teachers in the country had not received substantive formal technology training, either to support blended teaching and learning or to fully apply online learning. The decision by the Ministry of Basic Education to shut down schools in response to the pandemic forced teachers to adapt and innovate to ensure that learning continued despite the challenges faced.

<https://citizen.co.za/parenty/2368646/what-south-africas-teachers-brought-to-the-virtual-classroom-during-covid-19/>

### **Virtual field trips helping students see different countries without leaving the classroom**

In Florida, a Hillsborough County classroom has found a way to go on field trips without ever leaving their seats. Dual language students at Doris Ross Reddick Elementary are traveling to other countries, virtually. For Hispanic Heritage month, students are doing video calls with students in Cuba, Argentina and the Dominican Republic. Teachers say the silver lining of this pandemic is that virtual learning has expanded their abilities to connect with people in different locations on a level like never before.

<https://www.abcactionnews.com/news/region-hillsborough/virtual-field-trips-helping-students-see-different-countries-without-leaving-the-classroom>

### **Reinforcing academic integrity in physical, virtual classrooms**

Blended learning is being deployed as a solution to the ongoing impact of the pandemic across Southeast Asia. We have seen educators quickly adapting to new ways of delivering lessons and feedback, as well as grading students' work in distance learning and virtual environments. Naturally, there is also some concern about maintaining academic integrity when courses are being conducted with fewer opportunities for face-to-face interactions. The reduction of physical classroom interactions does not mean that academic integrity has to suffer. New technologies enable teachers to detect academic integrity issues early so that they have the opportunity to teach students to convey their original thinking and properly attribute ideas. Students can also use these tools to check their work before submitting it to reinforce a culture of integrity in blended classrooms.

<https://businessmirror.com.ph/2020/10/09/reinforcing-academic-integrity-in-physical-virtual-classrooms/>

### **Mature students ditch lockdown for the virtual classroom**

Canadian universities are reporting an increase in the number of mature students, as well as recent graduates enrolling in online studies. "Normally, our total registration in online and in-person courses [for spring/summer] is about 28,000," says Gary Hepburn, dean of Ryerson University's Chang School of Continuing Education. "This spring, it reached over 30,000 in online courses alone." The reasons motivating adult learners to return to school range from experiencing job loss and seeing lasting disruptions in their industry to taking advantage of the extra time at home to develop new or further expertise.

<https://www.macleans.ca/education/university-rankings/mature-students-ditch-lockdown-for-the-virtual-classroom/>

## Public Policies

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### **Britain is at a coronavirus tipping point, says deputy chief medical officer**

Britain is at a "tipping point" in the coronavirus crisis and the country must act now to stop history repeating itself, the deputy chief medical officer for England said on Sunday, urging people to follow the rules. With the number of cases rapidly rising particularly in the north of England, ministers are readying a new set of rules to try to tackle the crisis that will include handing more power to local leaders to track the virus' spread.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-britain-vantam/britain-is-at-a-coronavirus-tipping-point-says-deputy-chief-medical-officer-idUKKBN26W0IV?il=0>

### **India's coronavirus infections cross 7 million ahead of festivals**

India's coronavirus caseload topped 7 million on Sunday when the health ministry reported 74,383 new infections in the previous 24 hours, with a rise in infections in southern states offsetting a drop in western regions. Deaths from COVID-19 rose by 918 in the last 24 hours to 108,334, the ministry said. India added a million cases in just 13 days, according to a Reuters tally of government data, and it has the second-highest number of infections, behind the United States which is approaching the 8 million mark.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-india-cases/indias-coronavirus-infections-cross-7-million-ahead-of-festivals-idUKKBN26W05C>

### **French daily COVID cases set new record at almost 27,000**

The number of new coronavirus infections in France jumped over 26,000 in one day for the first time since the start of the epidemic, health ministry data showed on Saturday. The ministry reported 26,896 new infections, taking the cumulative total to 718,873 since the start of the year. The number of deaths from the virus increased by 54 to 32,684.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-france/french-daily-covid-cases-set-new-record-at-almost-27000-idUSKBN26V0VV>

### **Russia reports record single-day rise in coronavirus cases**

Russia's coronavirus cases rose by 12,846 on Saturday, a new daily record since the start of the outbreak early this year. The latest figures pushed the overall total number of infections in the country to 1,285,084. The previous record of 12,126 new cases was registered on Friday.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/10/russia-coronavirus-cases>

### **NZ's PM Ardern touts success in tackling pandemic in poll push**

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern on Sunday burnished her leadership credentials on the back of her successful response to the coronavirus pandemic at a campaign rally six days before the country's election on October 17. Polls show Ardern's Labour Party is expected to win the election with a wide lead over the conservative National Party, and could form government in a coalition with the Greens and New Zealand First.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/11/nzs-pm-ardern-touts-success-in-tackling-pandemic-in-poll-push>

### **Germany warns of 'exponential' rise in Covid infections**

Angela Merkel has raised the prospect of far-reaching restrictions on public life in some of Germany's biggest cities, as authorities grapple with an alarming rise in coronavirus infections across the country. Ms Merkel said Germany was facing a make-or-break moment, and what happened next would reflect "whether we can keep the pandemic under control... or whether that control will slip away from us". The chancellor was speaking after a video conference with 11 German mayors where it was agreed a further round of regulations would be imposed in areas where new infections exceed a threshold of 50 cases per 100,000 population in a week.

<https://www.ft.com/content/ba00ceb6-3c31-4e5e-bb2c-4c0fcc02fb29>

### **Fauci warns the US could see 300-400K coronavirus deaths**

Dr Anthony Fauci said that models suggest the US COVID-19 death toll could reach 300,000 or 400,000 during an American University webinar Tuesday. He warned that the US needs to brace for fall and winter with more mask-wearing and social distancing to slow the spread of the disease. Coronavirus has already killed more than 210,000 Americans since the pandemic began in January. He said that the White House outbreak 'could have been prevented' and is proof that coronavirus is 'not a hoax'

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-8813209/Fauci-says-White-House-COVID-19-infections-prevented.html>

### **Explained: When will we have a Covid-19 vaccine, and why does October hold the key?**

When will an antidote against Covid-19 finally become widely available? The answer to this question may eventually be found this month as a handful of coronavirus vaccine candidates near the end of late stage clinical trials. At least two vaccine frontrunners — Pfizer and Moderna Inc — are set to release late-stage and Phase 2 results this month. While experts have said vaccines were likely to reach the general public in the March-April 2021, drugmakers have been more ambitious with their calculations, with some firms like Moderna Inc eyeing the emergency-use authorisation route to launch their shots by year end. In fact, Pfizer may also file for US FDA approval of its vaccine this month itself, Bloomberg reported.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/coronavirus-vaccine-news-pfizer-moderna-oxford-astrazeneca-johnson-and-johnson-russia-china-6716982/>

### **China, Indonesia to enhance COVID-19 vaccine cooperation**

China and Indonesia have vowed to strengthen cooperation on COVID-19 vaccine during talks between Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan, Indonesian President's special envoy and the country's Coordinator for Cooperation with China. The pair met Friday in southwest China's Yunnan Province. Saying that vaccine cooperation is the current focus of bilateral anti-epidemic cooperation, Wang said China is willing to work with Indonesia to comprehensively promote the research and development, production and use of the vaccine, and jointly contribute to the availability and affordability of vaccines in the region and the world.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2020-10-10/China-Indonesia-to-enhance-COVID-19-vaccine-cooperation--Ut0xAmXLSE/index.html>

### **China Joins WHO Initiative to Distribute COVID Vaccine to Developing Countries**

China said Friday it is joining a World Health Organization international initiative to distribute COVID-19 vaccines to the developing world. China, Russia and the U.S. had said they were not joining the alliance to help two-thirds of world's population receive the vaccines by 2022. China's reversal makes it the largest country to participate in what is known as the COVAX deal. "We are taking this concrete step to ensure equitable distribution of vaccines, especially to developing countries, and hope more capable countries will also join and support Covax," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said in a statement.

<https://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/china-joins-who-initiative-distribute-covid-vaccine-developing-countries>

### **Brazil eagerly awaits China-developed COVID-19 vaccine as infections reach 5 million**

A total of 9,000 volunteers in Brazil have participated in trials of China-developed COVID-19 vaccines as the country reports more than 5 million COVID-19 cases as of October 7, following the US and India. The trials involve a vaccine developed by Chinese company Sinovac Biotech LTD, which started in July in Brazil and are scheduled to be completed by October 15. According to Brazil media reports in early October, a primary report on the trials has been submitted to the Brazil national health authority. João Doria, governor of the Sao Paulo state, where part of the trials have taken place, had previously said that vaccinations on volunteers would involve 9,000 people and be completed on October 15, and the vaccine, if approved, would hopefully be available to the public on December 15.

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1202960.shtml>

### **U.S., AstraZeneca strike deal for COVID-19 antibody treatment touted by Trump**

The U.S. government has awarded \$486 million (£372.7 million) to AstraZeneca Plc AZN.L to develop and secure supplies of up to 100,000 doses of COVID-19 antibody treatment, a similar class of drug that was used in treating President Donald Trump. The agreement, under the Trump administration's Operation Warp Speed, is for developing a monoclonal antibody cocktail that can prevent COVID-19, especially in high-risk population like those over 80 years old, the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services said. The treatment has come under the spotlight after Trump was treated with Regeneron Pharmaceuticals' REGN.O antibody drug last week. The president has also released a video on Twitter touting its benefits.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/healthcoronavirus-usa-astrazeneca/update-2-u-s-astrazeneca-strike-deal-for-covid-19-antibody-treatment-touted-by-trump-idUKL4N2H03AR>

### **Coronavirus: Spain imposes state of emergency on Madrid**

The Spanish government has ordered a 15-day state of emergency to bring down Covid-19 infection rates in the capital, after a court overturned a partial lockdown imposed a week ago. Madrid and nearby cities will see restrictions enforced by 7,000 police. The capital has been at the centre of a political row, with the centre-right city authorities challenging the Socialist-led government's demands. Cases are down and a state of emergency is unjustified, say city officials. Madrid health minister Enrique Ruiz Escudero insisted that measures already in place were working and that the national government order was "a measure no Madrileño will understand".

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-54478320>

### **Brazil nears 5m Covid-19 cases, epidemiologist fears second wave**

Brazil approached the mark of 5 million confirmed Covid-19 cases on Wednesday as it approached 150,000 deaths in the second most deadly coronavirus outbreak outside the United States. Though the number of cases has come down from a peak in July, public health experts warn that Brazil is ignoring social distancing precautions and faces the danger of a second wave by returning to normal everyday life too quickly. The Health Ministry reported on Tuesday 41,906 new cases, raising the total to 4,969,141, and 819 death, bringing the toll to 147,494 dead. The rolling daily average for last week was 658 deaths a day, down from 1,073 deaths per day in the last week of July. Average new cases were 26,140 day, almost half the rate of late July.

<https://www.aol.co.uk/news/2020/10/07/brazil-nears-5-million-covid-19-cases-epidemiologist-fears-sec/>

### **China's successful control of COVID-19**

According to a July survey by the Pew Research Center, two-thirds of Americans believe that China has done a bad job dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. It is clearly not an opinion shared by WHO. In a press conference in September, Mike Ryan, executive director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme, offered "deepest congratulations...to the front-line health workers in China and the population who worked together tirelessly to bring the disease to this very low level".

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(20\)30800-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(20)30800-8/fulltext)

### **Italy tops 4,000 daily coronavirus cases for first time since mid-April**

Italy has registered 4,458 new coronavirus infections over the past 24 hours, the health ministry said on Thursday, the first time the country has exceeded 4,000 cases in a single day since mid-April. There were also 22 COVID-related deaths on Thursday against 31 the day before -- far fewer than at the height of the pandemic in Italy in March and April. They increased by around 1,000 on Wednesday, when there were more than 3,000 daily cases for the first time since April 24. Italy is still recording significantly fewer daily cases than several other large European countries, such as France, Spain and Britain. The last time Italy saw more than 4,000 cases in a day was on was April 12, with 4,092 infections reported around a month before the government allowed restaurants, bars and shops to reopen. On that same day, some 431 people died.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-italy-idUKKBN26T2SL>

### **Vaccine suppliers given indemnity for 'inevitable' side effects**

The Morrison government has given the suppliers of two COVID-19 vaccines indemnity against liability for rare side effects that experts say are "inevitable" when a vaccine is rolled out. But the government will not set up a statutory compensation scheme, which the president of the Australian Medical Association, Omar Khorshid, said meant Australians who suffered "extremely rare" side

effects from the vaccines would face a tough battle to seek compensation.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/morrison-government-grants-indemnity-for-covid-19-vaccine-side-effects-20201008-p56360.html>

### **South Africa is the continent's COVID epicenter. Here is how it is transitioning into recovery mode**

South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa looked appropriately dour, and sounded appropriately cautious, as he appeared on national television [recently] to warn of the dangers of a second wave of infections and to urge the public against relaxing their guard against the virus. And yet the president's key message was a simple, optimistic and impressive truth. "We have succeeded in overcoming the worst phase of this epidemic," he declared.

<https://geneticliteracyproject.org/2020/10/09/south-africa-is-the-continent-s-covid-epicenter-here-is-how-it-is-transitioning-into-recovery-mode/>

### **Maintaining Services**

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#### **Germany Donates \$1 Million in Medical Equipment to Peru Amid Coronavirus Outbreak**

Germany has donated just over \$1 million in medical equipment to Peru to help people in remote sections of the Amazon cope with the coronavirus pandemic. Thursday's humanitarian gift of oxygen concentrators, digital thermometers, oximeters and more than 32,000 coronavirus tests for health professionals aims to help some 90,000 people from underserved communities in the Indigenous and rural areas of Peru's Amazon. Pilar Mazzetti of Peru's Health Ministry thanked Germany for donation, saying it opens the possibility to tend better to the indigenous communities, which have always been left behind, and which are difficult to tend to due to the distance. The donation, part of binational agreements signed in August, aims to provide primary health care to majority of the Indigenous communities, which have no health center.

<https://www.voanews.com/covid-19-pandemic/germany-donates-1-million-medical-equipment-peru-amid-coronavirus-outbreak>

#### **German hospitals warn of staff shortages amid surging coronavirus cases**

German hospitals warned of staff shortages on Friday, saying the sharp rise in new coronavirus infections also meant medics, nurses and support staff were getting sick or needing to isolate, leading to strains in providing care for patients. Germany, which has managed to keep the number of cases and deaths lower than many of its neighbours, is now seeing the biggest jumps in new infections since April, with more than 4,000 on both Thursday and Friday. At the Frankfurt university hospital, twice as many employees caught the virus in the past two weeks as in the three months before, its medical director Juergen Graf said at a news conference in Berlin. "This will be the bottleneck in the care supply," he said.

<https://in.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-germany/german-hospitals-warn-of-staff-shortages-amid-surging-coronavirus-cases-idUKKBN26U1GB>

#### **Australia in travel talks with Japan, Korea as coronavirus cases ease**

Australia is in talks with Japan, South Korea, Singapore and South Pacific nations on reopening travel as coronavirus infections ease, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said on Sunday. Australia shut its borders in March to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus and is looking to revive tourism to help pull the country out of its first recession in nearly three decades. While Australia has managed to contain the outbreak better than others, it is facing a second wave in the state of Victoria, where Melbourne remains under a tight lockdown. But infections there have been falling since early August.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-australia/australia-in-travel-talks-with-japan-korea-as-coronavirus-cases-ease-idUSKBN26W054>

## **Florida will be 'like a house on fire' in weeks with loose coronavirus restrictions, infectious disease expert says**

As health officials in Florida reported nearly 3,000 new cases of coronavirus on Friday, the state is bracing to become "like a house on fire," an infectious disease expert says. "Florida is ripe for another large outbreak," said Mike Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota. "What they've done is opened up everything as if nothing had ever happened there and you and I could be talking probably in eight to 10 weeks, and I will likely bet that Florida will be a house on fire," Osterholm told CNN's Jake Tapper. Health officials in Florida reported 2,908 new cases of Covid-19 and 118 deaths on Friday, according to data from the Florida Department of Health. The agency has reported at least 2,200 new cases daily for four consecutive days.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/09/health/us-coronavirus-friday/index.html>

## **How & Why Bengaluru Is Emerging as India's Worst Hit COVID-19 City**

Statistically speaking, Pune has the highest number of COVID-19 cases in India, as on 7 October. Bengaluru has the third-highest number of cases. However, at present, Bengaluru is the city worst affected by COVID-19 in India, and perhaps in the world. The key to understanding the severity of Bengaluru's COVID situation is in the number of cases reported in a 15-day period - between 23 September and 7 October, to be precise.

<https://www.thequint.com/news/india/coronavirus-india-how-bengaluru-emerged-as-indias-worst-covid-affected-city>

## **Nurses suffer burn-out, psychological distress in COVID fight - association**

Many nurses caring for COVID-19 patients are suffering burn-out or psychological distress, and many have faced abuse or discrimination outside of work, the International Council of Nurses (ICN) said. Supplies of personal protective equipment for nurses and other health workers in some care homes remain insufficient, it said, marking World Mental Health Day on Saturday. "We are extremely concerned about the mental health impact on nurses," Howard Catton, a British nurse who is the ICN's chief executive, told Reuters Television at the association's headquarters in Geneva.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-mentalhealth/nurses-suffer-burn-out-psychological-distress-in-covid-fight-association-idUKKBN26V0BP>

## **Fauci calls White House event a coronavirus 'superspreader'**

The United States' top infectious disease expert Anthony Fauci has said an event held in the White House on September 26 was a "superspreader event" that is suspected to have infected numerous people, including President Donald Trump, with the novel coronavirus. "I think the data speak for themselves. We had a superspreader event in the White House," Fauci said during an interview with CBS News Radio. "And it was in a situation where people were crowded together and were not wearing masks, so the data speak for themselves."

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/10/fauci-calls-white-house-rose-garden-event-a-super-spreader>

## **Coronavirus death rate in Bali could mean no Australian tourists**

The virus is spreading as Indonesians are now allowed to move between islands. In July, Bali's active cases sat at 1914 before soaring to 3671 in September. The confirmed cases are believed to be only a fraction of actual infections.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8806347/Coronavirus-death-rate-Bali-mean-no-Australian-tourists.html>

## **Healthcare Innovations**

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### **UK study tests if BCG vaccine protects against COVID**

The widely used BCG tuberculosis vaccine will be tested on frontline care workers in Britain for its effectiveness against COVID-19, researchers running the UK arm of a global trial said. Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine, used to protect against tuberculosis, induces a broad innate

immune-system response and has been shown to protect against infection or severe illness with other respiratory pathogens. "BCG has been shown to boost immunity in a generalised way, which may offer some protection against COVID-19," Professor John Campbell, of the University of Exeter Medical School, said.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-britain-bcg/uk-study-tests-if-bcg-vaccine-protects-against-covid-id-USL8N2H10H5>

### **Lilly's rheumatoid arthritis drug cuts COVID-19 deaths in trial, data shows**

Eli Lilly and Co said on Thursday fewer deaths were reported among COVID-19 patients taking a combination of its rheumatoid arthritis drug and Gilead Sciences Inc's remdesivir in a clinical trial, compared to only remdesivir. Lilly said the effect was most pronounced in patients on oxygen therapy, according to data from a U.S. government-backed trial, which however, was not designed to measure the effectiveness of baricitinib in preventing death.

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/medical/lilly-s-rheumatoid-arthritis-drug-cuts-covid-19-deaths-in-trial-data-shows/ar-BB19PykB>

### **Risk of ADE with new Covid-19 vaccine candidate low, Chinese researchers say**

Antibody-dependent enhancement (ADE) is a side-effect of inoculation that can make a virus more harmful. Team from Institute of Medical Biology say they cannot conclude their product will not cause ADE, but 'likelihood as a result of inoculation with this vaccine is small'

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3104710/coronavirus-risk-ade-low-new-chinese-vaccine-candidate>

### **Cheaper, faster: India's Feluda Covid-19 test gets approval**

An accurate and low cost paper-based strip test for Covid-19 has been approved for commercial launch by the Drugs Controller General of India. Indian scientists have come up with a new testing method called Feluda, a test which is similar to taking samples through a PCR swab test but is more reliable and simpler to use. It will cost 500 Indian rupees – about 6 euros. Kits are expected to reach the market shortly. The test was named after a famous fictional Bengali detective, though its full name is: Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR) Feluda test.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/cheaper-faster-india-feluda-covid-101800580.html>

### **China's experimental COVID-19 vaccine appears safe - study**

A Chinese experimental coronavirus vaccine being developed by the Institute of Medical Biology under the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences was shown to be safe in an early stage clinical trial, researchers said. In a Phase 1 trial of 191 healthy participants aged between 18 and 59, vaccination with the group's experimental shot showed no severe adverse reactions, its researchers said on Tuesday in a paper posted on medRxiv preprint server ahead of peer review.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/health-coronavirus-china-vaccine/chinas-experimental-covid-19-vaccine-appears-safe-study-idUSL4N2GY0U5>