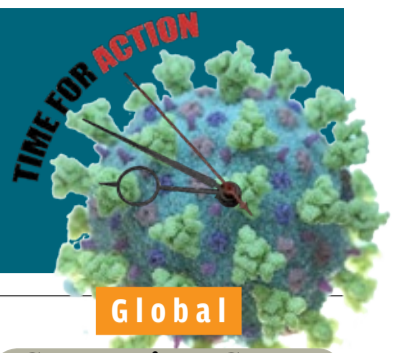


WORLD



Britain's Prince Charles tests positive for coronavirus



Prince Charles, the heir to the British throne, has tested positive for coronavirus, a spokeswoman said. Charles is 71 years old.

One third of world under lockdown



Deserted roads in New Delhi

New Delhi

India's billion-plus population went into a three-week lockdown on Wednesday, with a third of the world now under orders to stay indoors, as US politicians agreed to spend \$2 trillion to counter the economic damage of the coronavirus pandemic.

Financial markets soared as the Senate and the White House thrashed out a stimulus package worth roughly 10 percent of the entire US economy, an injection Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said represented a "wartime level of investment".

President Donald Trump has voiced hope that the United States will be "raring to go" by mid-April, but his optimism appeared to stand almost alone among world leaders, who were ratcheting up the movement restrictions in a bid to stifle the spread of the disease.

India ordered its 1.3 billion people -- the world's second-biggest population -- to stay at home for three weeks.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "total lockdown" call doubled the number of people around the globe under some form of movement restriction to more than 2.6 billion people.

"To save India, to save its every citizen, you, your family... every street, every neighbourhood is being put under lockdown," Modi said in a televised address.

Saudi tightens coronavirus



Trump declares coronavirus fight close to end

curfew; travellers stranded in UAE

Saudi Arabia reported its second coronavirus death and tightened a nationwide curfew, barring entry to and exit from the capital Riyadh and the holy cities of Mecca and Medina as well as movement between all provinces from yesterday.

The orders, approved by King Salman and published by state media, also brought forward the start of curfew in the three cities to 3pm from 7pm starting today.

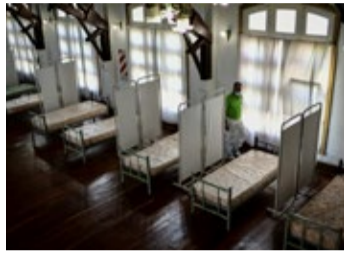
Saudi Arabia introduced the 21-day curfew on Monday after registering a jump in infections. Its second fatality was a 46-year-old foreign resident in Mecca, among 133 new cases taking the total to 900.

Across the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council the tally rose to 2,472 with seven deaths, as the United Arab Emirates registered 85 new infections, Oman 15 and Kuwait four.

In the UAE, the region's tourism, business and transit hub, hundreds of Europeans were stranded after airports halted passenger flights earlier than expected.

Saudi Arabia has taken rigorous steps to contain the outbreak, also including halting international flights as well as suspending the Umrah year-round pilgrimage and closing mosques, schools, malls and restaurants.

An Interior Ministry spokesman on Wednesday reported high compliance so far.



Beds for COVID-19 patients are set up inside the Republica de los Ninos amusement park in La Plata, Argentina



Gun stores in the US have seen an uptick in business as a result of the spreading coronavirus pandemic

Dubai directed private sector companies to implement remote working systems for 80 per cent of staff from now until April 9, the authority regulating business in the emirate, Dubai Economy, said on Twitter on Wednesday. Pharmacies, grocery stores, supermarkets and cooperative societies were excluded from the worder.

UAE authorities have urged people to stay home but not announced an official curfew or suspended work. On Wednesday, they directed food retail outlets to remain open 24 hours a day but not exceed 30pc capacity to ensure physical distance of 2 meters (6 ft) between shoppers.

Elsewhere Ireland ordered non-essential businesses shut, Britain planned a 4,000-bed emergency hospital in London and Spain called for practical support from the NATO military alliance.

And nearly 130 million Americans, or 40 percent of the population, are under or will soon come under some lockdown order, including in the largest state of California.

Many governments are listening to health experts who warn the only way to slow the epidemic -- and save the lives of the elderly and vulnerable -- is by imposing "social isolation" measures.

But Trump is not convinced the move is worth the enormous economic cost.



Members of the Syrian Civil Defence (White Helmets) disinfect a mosque in the Syrian city of al-Bab



Customers queue outside a super store in Soweto as South Africa enters a 21-day national lockdown



Medical staff dressed in protective gear prepare to test people for COVID-19 at a drive-through centre at Vibhavadi Hospital in Bangkok



India ordered its 1.3 billion people to stay at home for three weeks

Three US sailors test positive

Washington

Three US sailors from the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt have been diagnosed with the novel coronavirus, the first cases reported on a US Navy ship currently on deployment, officials said Tuesday.

The three have been evacuated and all those they had come into contact with on the vessel, which has more than 5,000 personnel on board, have been quarantined, Acting Navy Secretary Thomas B. Modly told reporters.

The ship was last in port in Vietnam 15 days ago but Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Gilday said it was difficult to connect the cases to a particular port visit.

Libya reports first coronavirus case

Tripoli

Libyan health minister of the UN-recognised GNA late Tuesday reported "a first contamination with the coronavirus in Libya," without giving details of the case.

"The necessary measures have been taken to treat" the patient, the minister, Ehmed Ben Omar, said.

Expo 2020 Dubai staff member contracts coronavirus

Reuters | Dubai

Organisers of the Expo 2020 Dubai world fair, scheduled to start in October, have confirmed one coronavirus case among staff. A spokesman confirmed the case and said Expo 2020 Dubai would "continue". "All those in contact or in touch with the individual are following the protocols, including testing, quarantine, and self-isolation measures," the spokesman said.

Virus-stricken Diamond Princess leaves Yokohama



Yokohama | Japan

The Diamond Princess, a coronavirus-hit cruise ship off Japan that saw 712 passengers and crew contracting the disease with 10 deaths, left its moorings in Yokohama yesterday, a city official said.

"Disinfection work has been finished. Quarantine confirmed that the work has been finished," a Yokohama city official said.

"It is leaving the pier" around 0500 GMT, he said, without revealing where it was heading or how many crew members were on-board.

Chinese father builds 'baby pod' to protect infant from Virus



Reuters | Shanghai

The father of a two-month-old infant in Shanghai has created a custom-built pod complete with an air purification system to keep his baby safe from the coronavirus outbreak.

Cao Junjie, 30, refashioned a cat carrier to make the sealable pod that includes an air-quality monitor displaying the concentration of carbon dioxide inside.

"Because of the epidemic, I spent a month making this baby safety pod for my kid ... It can provide a safe and comfortable environment for the baby," Cao told Reuters on Wednesday. Cao's wife, Fang Lulu, said she initially wasn't sure how comfortable the baby would be inside the pod.

"I think the baby pod he made is pretty safe. We have tried it several times, so I feel relieved," said Fang.

Coronavirus Cases:

446,563

Deaths

19,803

Recovered:

112,050

Active cases

314,710

Closed cases

131,853

Country	Total cases	Total Deaths
China	81,218	3,281
Italy	69,176	6,820
USA	60,539	816
Spain	47,610	3,434
Germany	35,740	186
Iran	27,017	2,077
France	22,304	1,100
Switzerland	10,171	149
SKorea	9,137	126
UK	8,227	433
Canada	2,892	28
Turkey	1,872	44
Russia	658	1
India	606	10
B'desh	39	5
Pakistan	1,022	8
Thailand	934	4
Indonesia	790	58
Philippines	636	38

160-year-old Vatican newspaper succumbs to coronavirus



A woman reads a copy of the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano

Reuters | Vatican City

The Vatican daily L'Osservatore Romano, which Pope Francis has jokingly called "the party newspaper", suspended printing for only the third time in nearly 160 years yesterday due to the coronavirus.

The paper, which was founded in 1861, will continue publishing online and most of its staff of about 60, including 20 journalists, will work from home, editor Andrea Monda said.

Wednesday evening's edition will be the last for the time being.

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases	Serious, Critical	Tot cases/1m pop
Bahrain	416	+27	3		190	226	2	246
Saudi Arabia	900	+133	1		29	869		26
UAE	333	+85	2		52	279	2	34
Kuwait	195	+4			43	152	6	46
Oman	99	+15			17	82		19
Jordan	154				1	153		15
Iraq	346	+30	29	+2	103	214		9
Egypt	442	+40	21	+1	93	328		4