

COVID-19 Weekly Update

18 June

WEAR A FACE
COVERING
ON PUBLIC
TRANSPORT

it's hard to maintain social distance
#LondonTogether

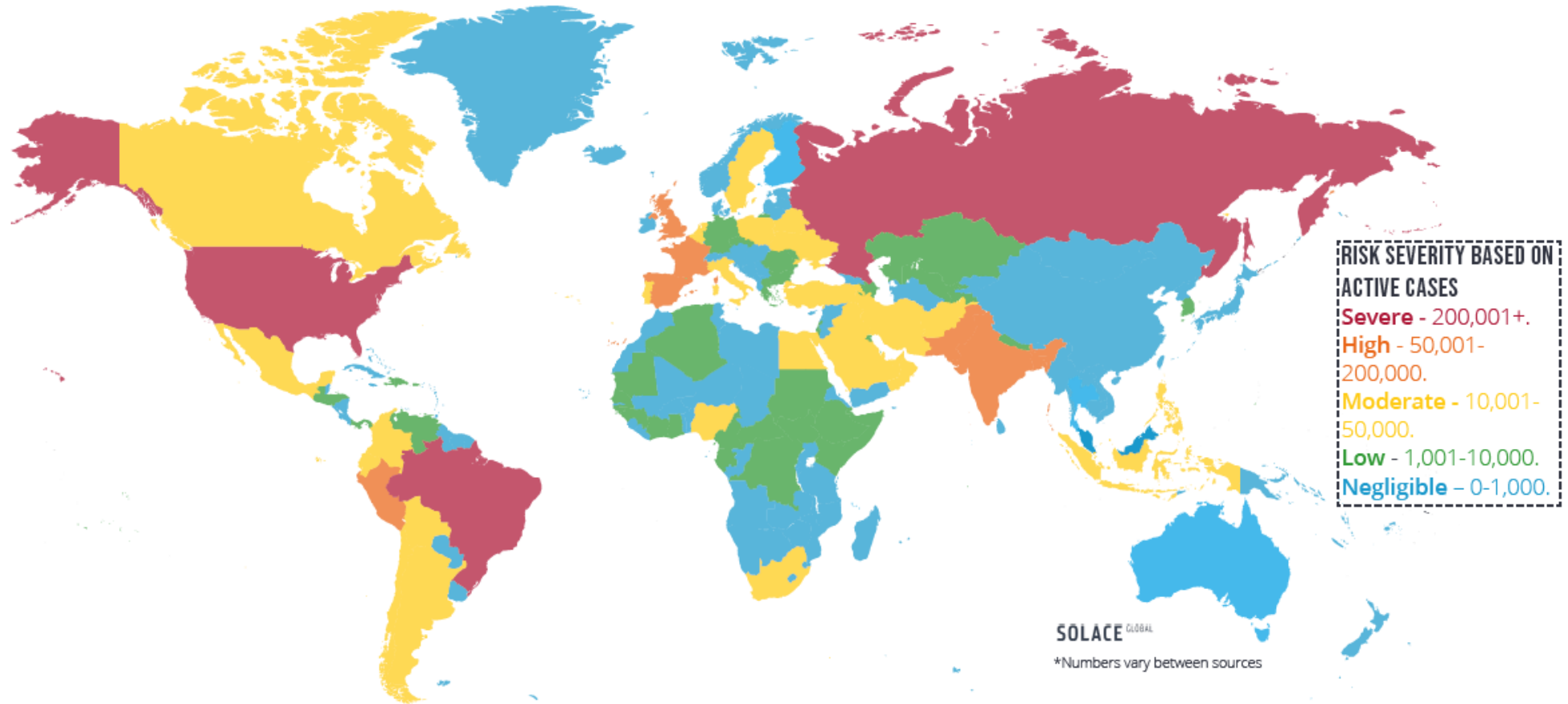


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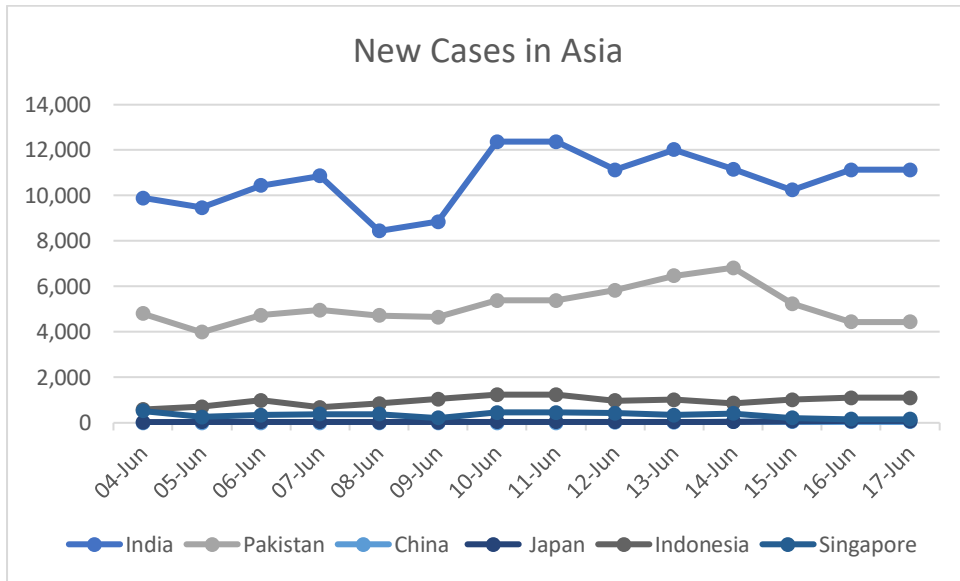
Current Statistics (Numbers vary between sources)

Total cases	8,475,039	Total Active Cases	3,579,352	Total Confirmed Recoveries	4,443,651	Total Confirmed Deaths	452,036
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Asia



Asia, specifically China, the first place to experience COVID-19 as well as impose stringent lockdowns and emerge from them. The continent has also been the first to report a resurgence of infections and re-impose restrictions amid fears of second waves. New clusters of cases have previously been identified in Seoul, South Korea, and in Japan's Hokkaido region – both of which re-imposed lockdowns despite effectively containing the virus during their initial outbreaks.

Most recently, a spike of 31 new cases were confirmed in Beijing on 16 June, bringing the total number of infections to 137 over the past six days; prompting authorities to curtail non-essential travel out of the capital, close schools and universities, cancel hundreds of flights and raise its emergency level from three to two on the city's four-tiered COVID response scale. The new outbreak is believed to have originated in a sprawling wholesale food market in the south-eastern district of Fengtai, spreading to at least nine of the capital's 17 districts. In addition, the Xinfadi seafood market, which also sold animal produce and meat, as well as two other markets in nearby districts have been shut after newly confirmed cases.

Beijing's current outbreak comes as China was returning to normal having seemingly brought their outbreak largely under control. Indeed, prior to the new infections, the country had not reported a new domestic case in almost two months. Beijing's outbreak, as well as those seen in South Korea and Japan,

serve as a stark reminder that it is highly likely that second waves and localised outbreaks will occur as businesses and social activity begins to resume – even in country's with effective containment strategies.

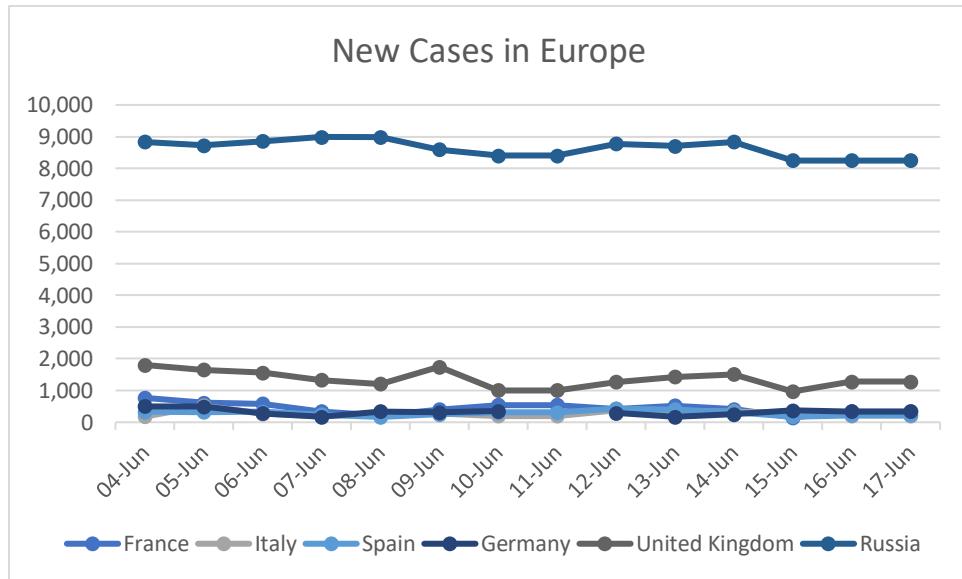
In other news, both India and Pakistan suffered their deadliest tolls of the pandemic thus far on 16 June, reporting 2,006 and 140 deaths respectively. New cases in both countries continue to rise sharply, pushing healthcare systems to the brink. Similar to the situation in Beijing, authorities in Chennai on 15 June announced a 12-day "complete lockdown" from 19 June in an attempt to combat a recent surge in new cases. Furthermore, the German foreign ministry sent a message to nationals in India recommending that they "seriously consider whether a temporary return to Germany or another country with an assured health care system makes sense".

Indonesia reported just over 1,000 new infections on 17 June, overtaking Singapore to become Southeast Asia's worst-affected nation in terms of total COVID-19 cases. In addition, a further 45 deaths were reported on the same day, meaning the country has the highest death toll in East Asia outside of China. The sharp rise in cases has been attributed to a ramping up of testing and contact tracing, which has helped to identify South Sulawesi and South Kalimantan as emerging hot spots in the vast archipelago. As cases continue to mount, President Joko Widodo has threatened to reimpose lockdown restrictions if necessary, as regions, including the capital Jakarta, began easing measures this month.

Countries	Active cases	Covid New cases	Covid	Domestic lockdown	International Travel Restrictions
India	155,420	Stable	Moderate	High	
Pakistan	93,348	Stable	Moderate	High	
China	252	Large increase	Light	High	
Japan	959	Increase	Light	High	
Indonesia	22,912	Slight Increase	Moderate	High	
Singapore	10,027	Slight Decrease	Moderate	High	



Europe



As of 17 June, Europe continues to be the second worst-affected continent in terms of total cases and deaths, trailing only the Americas (North and South combined). The continent has exceeded two million total cases and is approaching 200,000 deaths, with thousands of new cases being reported every day in the past two weeks. Despite rising case numbers on the continent, many European nations have adjusted their national COVID-19 measures, with most adopting a phased approach towards a resumption of business and social activity.

The European Commission published a vaccine strategy on 17 June that proposes a global alliance of high-income nations to ensure that poorer countries have access to any coronavirus vaccine as, or if, one should be developed. The coalition would act as an “international buyers group”, pooling their resources to reserve any future remedy with the aim of guaranteeing access for “all who need it most in the world”, including both European and low-income nations, according to the plan. Brussels submitted the proposal as fears are growing that poorer nations and those with ongoing conflicts, such as in Africa and in the Middle East, could be left unable to procure adequate vaccine supplies bought up by more affluent countries.

In related news, Germany’s CureVac has become the second German biotechnology company to be

granted permission to begin clinical trials of a potential COVID-19 vaccine, making it one of 11 companies worldwide currently conducting human trials.

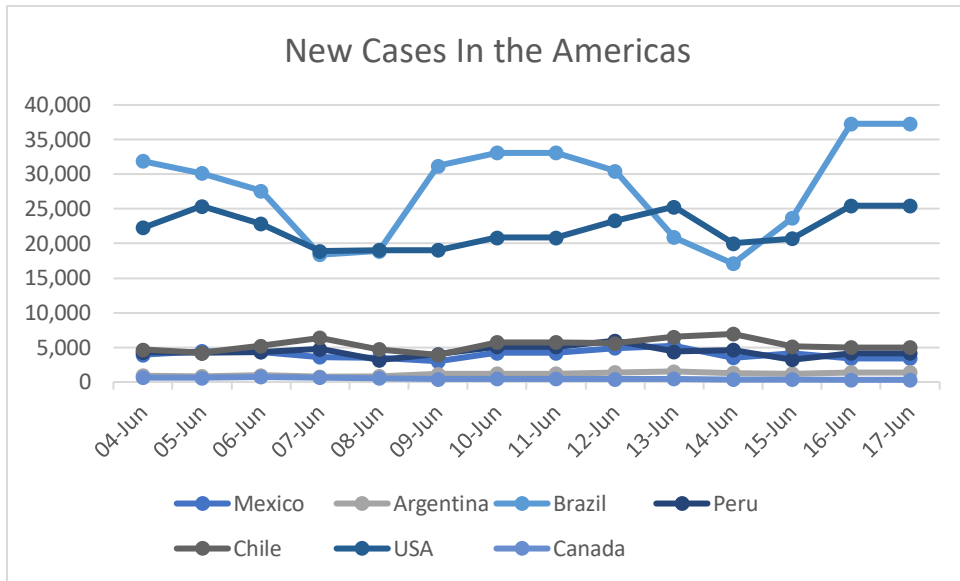
Earlier this week the German government announced a plan to secure a 300 million Euro stake in the company in a bid to block a foreign takeover after it attracted interest from the Trump administration. Elsewhere in the UK, scientists have hailed dexamethasone, a widely available a cheap generic steroid, as the biggest COVID-19 drug breakthrough to date, following a trial by the University of Oxford. The drug was found to slash the death rate of the most seriously ill patients on ventilators by around one-third, and by one-fifth in patients receiving oxygen. During the daily press briefing on 16 June, Boris Johnson said he was proud of British scientists “who have made the first robust clinical trial anywhere in the world to find a coronavirus treatment proven to reduce the risk of death”.

During a television address on 14 June, French President Emmanuel Macron said the country had won its “first major victory” while also warning that “the summer of 2020 will be a summer unlike any other and we will need to watch the evolution of the epidemic to be prepared in case it comes back with renewed strength”. The president made the comments as he announced the easing of several coronavirus restrictions from 15 June. As of Monday, travel to most other European nations has been permitted while people are now able to visit family members in retirement homes, which have been hit hard by the pandemic. In addition, restaurants, hotels and cafes, that had already opened across much of France, were allowed to reopen in the Paris region – which has recorded the highest number of cases in the country.

Countries	Active Covid cases	New Covid cases	Domestic lockdown	International Travel Restrictions
France	54,834	Decrease	Light	High
Italy	24,569	Stable	Light	Moderate
Spain	N/A	Stable	Light	Severe
Germany	5,872	Slight Decrease	Light	Moderate
UK	N/A	Slight Decrease	Strict	Moderate
Russia	241,481	Stable	Strict	High



Americas



The Americas continue to bear the brunt of the pandemic. Three out of the world's top 10 worst-hit countries are located either in North or South America and have a combined total of over 4 million cases – half the global tally. Indeed, a sharp rise of cases in Latin America in the second half of May has prompted the WHO to declare the Americas as the new epicentre of the pandemic – a status which it retains as of 17 June.

The United States remains the worst-affected nation by far in terms of both total COVID-19 cases and deaths, with over 2 million and 120,000 respectively, representing over a quarter of worldwide totals. Most states have begun to reopen and have allowed a return to social and economic activity as they move forward with their phased reopening plans. However, in recent days over half of all states have reported an increase in COVID-19 cases, with some, including Arizona and Texas, reporting record daily increases in infections on Tuesday, while ten others have seen numbers surge by more than 50 per cent in the past week compared to one week earlier.

The US Department of Homeland Security has extended border closures with both Mexico and Canada until at least 21 July, having previously been extended in April and May. As such, the borders between the nations will remain closed to all non-essential, however, the restrictions will not apply to trade and

travel deemed essential, including for work, study, infrastructure support, health, and economic services. In a statement released by the acting secretary of Homeland Security, the extension was imposed “Based on the success of the existing restrictions and the emergence of additional global COVID-19 hotspots”. Mexico’s foreign ministry tweeted on Tuesday that the terms of the border closure will remain the same since they were first implemented on 21 March.

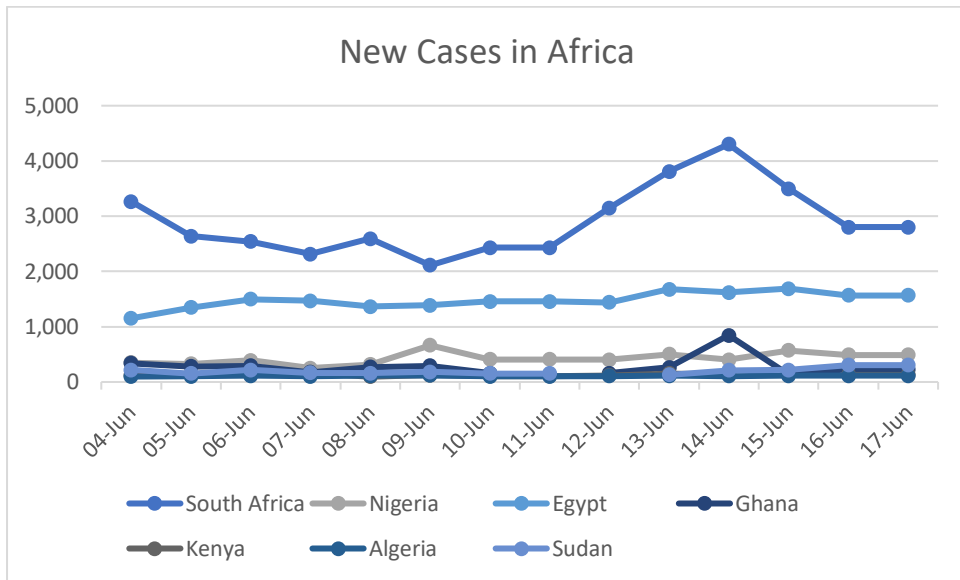
In South America, Honduras’ President Juan Orlando Hernandez Alvarado confirmed on Wednesday that he had tested positive for the virus, along with his wife. A government statement said that the President “maintained at all times the preventive measures recommended by the health authorities, however, due to the nature of his work, it was not possible to remain in total isolation”. The government also announced that Hernandez’s treatment regimen would involve a combination of an antiseptic drug, the antibiotic azithromycin and the antiparasitic ivermectin.

Brazil, the world’s second-worst coronavirus hotbed, is fast approaching one million cases and 50,000 deaths, although health experts believe the tallies could be far higher due to inadequate testing. On 16 June, the same day that Brazil announced a record 34,918 new cases, Walter Braga Netto, the head of the office of the president’s chief of staff, known as Casa Civil, and one of the top officials handling the crisis, said the country’s outbreak was under control. During a webinar held by the Commercial Association of Rio de Janeiro, Braga said “there is a crisis, we sympathize with bereaved families, but it is managed” while also optimistically claiming that Brazil’s deaths-per-million figure was lower than that of several Western European nations while. Unfortunately, Braga’s optimism is not shared by the WHO’s regional director, Carissa Etienne, who said that Brazil remains a major concern as transmission rates fail to slow down. Etienne also urged Brazil and other Latin American nations to strengthen social distancing and implement a gradual reopening of their economies.

Countries	Active Covid cases	New Covid cases	Domestic lockdown	International Travel Restrictions
Mexico	20,375	Stable	Moderate	High
Argentina	23,107	Increase	High	High
Brazil	406,014	Stable	Moderate	High
Peru	104,895	Stable	High	High
Chile	24,834	Slight Increase	High	High
USA	1,186,217	Stable	Moderate	High
Canada	29,811	Decrease	Moderate	High



Africa



COVID-19 continues to spread in Africa, with confirmed case numbers across the continent approaching 300,000. The World Health Organisation (WHO) believes that the pandemic is accelerating in Africa, with it taking 98 days to reach 100,00 cases but only a further 19 days to reach 200,000. Ten out of the continent’s 54 countries are currently driving the rise in numbers, accounting for nearly 80% of all cases. More than 70% of COVID-19 deaths are taking place in only five countries: Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa and Sudan. A number of African nations have begun to relax lockdowns in order to allow their economies to restart.

In Nigeria, doctors have begun an indefinite strike to demand better pay and conditions, including the provision of more personal protective equipment (PPE). Those treating COVID-19 patients have, for now, continued to work but National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD) has indicated that these practitioners will stage a walkout in the coming weeks if their demands are not met by the government. Nigeria has the third most confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Africa and is likely to see an increase in the rate of deaths associated with the virus should this dispute persist.

In Tunisia, Prime Minister Elyes Fakhfakh has announced that the country has been victorious in its fight against COVID-19, with new confirmed cases falling to very low levels. Fakhfakh has also indicated that

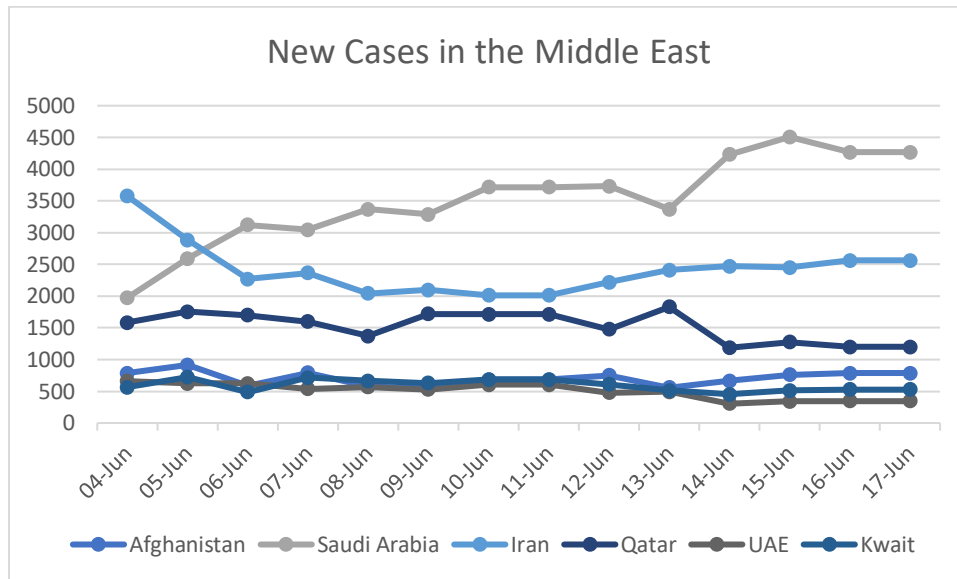
Tunisia’s borders would reopen on 27 June. Tunisia has been largely successful through imposing tight lockdown restrictions at a point when there were very few confirmed cases of the virus in the country. As borders reopen, however, the resurgence of the virus inside Tunisia cannot be ruled out.

Authorities in Equatorial Guinea have eased lockdown measures in recent days, with schools and some sections of the hospitality industry reopening on 15 June. Though hotels and restaurants have been allowed to commence operations, nightclubs and larger entertainment venues will remain closed. Additionally, the wearing of face masks in public places has been mandated by law.

Countries	Active Covid cases	New Covid cases	Domestic lockdown	International Travel Restrictions
South Africa	32,646	Increase	Moderate	High
Nigeria	11,070	Slight Increase	Moderate	High
Egypt	33,360	Stable	Moderate	High
Ghana	7,809	Stable	Moderate	High
Kenya	2,427	Slight Decrease	High	
Algeria	2,517	Stable	Moderate	
Sudan	4,443	Stable	High	High



Middle East



Concerns around a second wave of COVID-19 cases in Iran have heightened as the country has seen a substantial increase in deaths attributed to the virus in recent days. There have consistently been over 100 reported deaths per day in Iran in past days, the highest number in several months. After implementing lockdown and curfew measures to combat the outbreak, Iran has brought down both the rate of deaths and reported new cases by May. However, despite warnings from some public health officials of a second wave of cases, Iranian authorities chose to reopen public and commercial life, likely in an effort to prop up the country's sanction-hit economy. Officials are particularly concerned about the spread of COVID-19 in Tehran, where large numbers of people have consistently ignored social distancing advice.

Amnesty International has raised concerns over the invasiveness of contact-tracing apps being used in both Kuwait and Bahrain. The group has indicated that it believed that Bahrain's "BeAware Bahrain" and Kuwait's "Shlonik" apps are a risk to users' privacy and security and has urged the governments to rethink their approach. Most contact-tracing apps rely on Bluetooth signals, but Bahrain and Kuwait's capture location data through GPS and upload this to a central database, tracking the movements of users in real time. Additionally, the Bahraini and Kuwaiti governments have not guaranteed users anonymity, with concerns information may be shared with third parties.

Israel has seen a spike in coronavirus cases as schools, businesses, restaurants, bars, tourist attractions and other establishments reopen. Schools throughout the country have closed after cases tied to students and staff members continue to climb. Authorities have opted to impose a number of new measures through legislation. New regulations make the wearing of masks in public mandatory and require those suspected of having the virus to quarantine in their homes, with fines imposed on those who do not isolate.

Authorities in Saudi Arabia are expected to significantly scale back or even cancel this year's annual Hajj pilgrimage, a first in modern history, as confirmed cases of COVID-19 increase in the country. A full-scale celebration, which last year drew about 2.5 million pilgrims, appears increasingly unlikely after authorities advised Muslims in late March to defer preparations. Several Muslim nations have voiced frustration at a lack of clarity from Riyadh on the issue of whether the Hajj will be cancelled.

Countries	Active Covid cases	New Covid cases	Domestic lockdown	International Travel Restrictions
Afghanistan	20,212	Slight Increase	High	Severe
Saudi Arabia	45,723	Slight Increase	Moderate	Severe
Iran	30,699	Increase	Moderate	High
Qatar	21,536	Decrease	Moderate	High
UAE	13,828	Decrease	Moderate	High
Kuwait	8,449	Slight Decrease	Moderate	High