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## Comparison of Measures Against Covid-19

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### Why in News

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The Oxford University has created a **Stringency Index** which shows how strict a country's measures were and at what stage of the **Covid-19** spread, it enforced these.

**India** enforced **one of the strongest lockdowns at an early phase** of case growth.

### Stringency Index

- The **Government Response Stringency Index** is a composite measure based on various response indicators including school and workplace closures, stay-at-home policies and travel bans, rescaled to a **value from 0 to 100**.  
A **higher index score** indicates a **higher level of stringency** (100 = strictest response).
- It is among the metrics used by the **Oxford Coronavirus Government Response Tracker (OxCGRT)**.
- The Tracker has a team of 100 Oxford community members who update a database of 17 indicators of government response.

### Key Points

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- The Index has found that India has one of the strongest lockdown measures in the world, at a **100 score** since 22<sup>nd</sup> March, when the **nationwide lockdown** was first imposed.  
It was **slightly relaxed** on 20<sup>th</sup> April after the government eased norms for certain workplaces in regions outside the **red zones** (zones with increasing rate of active cases).
- Other countries with a 100 score are **Honduras, Argentina, Jordan, Libya, Sri Lanka, Serbia and Rwanda**.

- **Death Curve and Stringency Score:**
  - The Index also provides an overlay of countries' death curve and their stringency score.
  - Eighteen countries were **compared for the highest death count at the strongest measures.**
    - Italy, Spain or France saw their deaths just begin to flatten as they reached their highest stringency
    - China's death curve saw a little or no change after it put stronger measures.
    - In the UK, the US and India, the death curve has not flattened even after imposition of the strictest measures.
- **India's Comparison:**
  - India called its **strict lockdown at a much earlier point on its case and death curves** when compared to other countries with similar or higher case load.
    - While imposing lockdown, India had around 320 cases while others had more than 500 cases.
    - By 22<sup>nd</sup> March, India saw only 4 deaths while others saw more deaths.
  - Spain called for its strictest measures later in its case and death count than all others.
  - **Sweden** has had the **most liberal measures** in this set and **Iran** the **second most liberal.**
- **Response on WHO's Recommendations**
  - The researchers also examined if countries meet four of the six **World Health Organization's** (WHO) recommendations for relaxing physical distancing measures. The **four of them** are:
    - Control transmission to a level the healthcare system can manage.
    - The healthcare system can detect and isolate all cases (not just serious ones).
    - Manage transfer to and from high-risk transmission zones.
    - Community engagement.
  - It was found that **no countries meet the four measured recommendations**, but 20 are close.
    - **India scored 0.7** (below Australia, Thailand, Taiwan and South Korea) because it scored 0 for controlling its cases.
    - The **highest scorers** on this index, at **0.9**, were **Iceland, Hong Kong, Croatia and Trinidad & Tobago.**

**Source: IE**