

## NEW ZEALAND'S ZERO COVID STRATEGY



### Issue

New Zealand government has imposed a strict nation-wide lockdown after a single case of Covid-19 was reported in the country.

### Background

Experts have called the move as archaic and misinformed. The country has also earned the nickname of 'hermit nation'.

### Details

- The Prime Minister has ignored the criticism and emphasized the need to adopt elimination strategy to counter the pandemic.
- The same move was also praised by global health experts during previous bouts of the pandemic when New Zealand recorded low numbers.

### The strategy

- The strategy by the Prime Minister is "go hard, go early" to restrict community transmission by eliminating the disease at early stage.
- It is also called as 'zero covid strategy' as the move is expected to hit at the root of the transmission.

### Status across the world

The virus is undergoing mutation rather than completely eliminating. Countries have changed strategy to make provisions to live with the virus.

### The zero covid strategy

- It will undertake strict lockdowns, close borders and shut down travel to reduce the number of Covid-19 cases to manageable levels.
- Countries including New Zealand adopted 'influenza pandemic plan', which will mitigate numbers by strengthening their healthcare capacity.
- Similar strategy was adopted by Australia which focused on eliminating case till the last one. This involved closing borders and setting up quarantine hotels.
- Hong Kong has followed a similar one. This has forced European Chamber of Commerce to request for unlocking, which has been refused by administration.

### Need for changing strategy

- Many countries are now adopting lesser restrictions and more freedom for its citizens. Trusting vaccination process, UK has eliminated pandemic restrictions.
- US has also relaxed wearing of masks in some areas. Foreign travelers can now visit UK if they are fully vaccinated without restrictions.
- France and Australia have also expressed the need to learn to live with the virus by adopting precautions and restrain.

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