

# Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker

## Regional report – South Asia



This report summarises the major changes in the region for the Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker's [Containment and Health Index](#), providing a high level overview of shifts in government policies.

OxCGRT is created by the Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford. For more information visit [www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker](http://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker).

<b>REGION</b>	SOUTH ASIA
<b>Date range</b>	16-30 September 2020
<b>Reported by</b>	Rushay Naik

### Brief summary of major changes:

Through the second half of September, countries across South Asia pursued substantial 'unlock' agendas amid slowing growth in COVID-19 cases in the region. The reopening of schools and educational institutions was particularly emphasized: India and Pakistan both aimed to reopen schools during the period amid various challenges in compliance. On 21 September, India allowed schools outside of designated containment zones to reopen earlier than expected in its 'Unlock 4 phase', although several states elected to issue orders to maintain school closures. Throughout the period, Pakistan resumed all classes, ending with primary schools reopening on 30 September except for two dozen primary schools found to be non-compliant with government-issued Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Bhutan entered its 'Unlocking Phase III' earlier in September, while maintaining earlier containment restrictions in some high-risk areas during the period. Nepal continued its sectoral approach to its rollback of restrictions on 17 September, reopening restaurants, hotels, and long-distance public transports at 50% capacity across the country.

<b>C1: School Closing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>India:</b> partially reopened schools on 21 September, with classes 9-12 permitted to visit schools outside of containment zones earlier than the previously announced 30 September reopening date; several states, including <b>Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal</b>, maintained school closures past 21 September under state orders</li> <li>• <b>Pakistan:</b> reopened universities, colleges, classes 9-12 on 15 September; classes 6-8 reopened on 23 September; primary schools reopened after a final review by 30 September, with the exception of two dozen schools remaining closed after non-compliance with SOPs</li> </ul>
<b>C2: Workplace Closing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Afghanistan:</b> maintained closures of bars, cinemas, museums and gyms, while most hotels, restaurants, and shops reopened with guidelines to wear masks</li> <li>• <b>Bhutan:</b> permitted some shops to reopen from 4 September, including hardware shops and automobile workshops; several other businesses followed on 7 September, with offices, electronics shops, and furniture stores permitted to reopen with COVID-19 protocols; high-risk businesses including barber shops</li> </ul>

Summaries are created with data from the OxCGRT, uploaded by contributors. For specific references, please see the database [www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker](http://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/covidtracker)

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	<p>and salons remain closed; high-risk areas, including <b>Phuentsholing</b>, <b>Gelephu</b>, <b>Samtse</b>, and <b>Samdrupjongkhar</b>, remained at Unlocking Phase II level restrictions on workplaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nepal</b>: reopened restaurants and hotels on 17 September</li> </ul>
<b>C3: Cancel Public Events</b>	No changes reported
<b>C4: Restrictions on Gatherings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bhutan</b>: maintained restrictions on public gatherings, outdoor activities, and visits to spiritual sites on 7 September amid its Unlocking Phase III of other sectors during the period</li> <li>• <b>Pakistan</b>: permitted the reopening of marriage halls on 15 September, setting a maximum of 350 attendees to all weddings nationwide</li> </ul>
<b>C5: Close Public Transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bhutan</b>: allowed the resumption of public transports within districts on 4 September, limited to 50 percent capacity at all times during the period</li> <li>• <b>Nepal</b>: permitted limited long-distance public bus transports to resume on 17 September, limited to 50 percent capacity and strict mitigation measures</li> </ul>
<b>C6: Stay at Home requirements</b>	No changes reported
<b>C7: Restrictions on Internal movement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bhutan</b>: enabled the movement of private vehicles for essential travel within districts as part of Unlocking Phase III policies, with vehicles limited to half of their maximum capacity</li> </ul>
<b>C8: International Travel Controls</b>	No changes reported
<b>H2: Testing Policy</b>	No changes reported
<b>H3: Contact Tracing</b>	No changes reported

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### Cases vs Government Response Index:

