

Hungary tightens lockdown as coronavirus situation worsens

March 4 2021



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Hungary tightened Thursday an existing partial lockdown by ordering shutdowns of schools and most shops and businesses in response to a spike in coronavirus infections and deaths.

The 9.8-million-strong EU member reported 6,278 new COVID-19

cases on Thursday, the highest daily tally in three [months](#), while the death toll also increased steeply to 152.

Hungary since November has been under a partial lockdown that includes an evening and nighttime curfew, a ban on gatherings, and the closure of restaurants, schools and universities.

"From March 8 [primary schools](#) and kindergartens must close until April 7," Gergely Gulyas, Prime Minister Viktor Orban's chief-of-staff, told a weekly briefing.

Shops apart from food and drugstores, and [petrol stations](#) must also close to March 22, he said.

All services apart from private medical clinics were also ordered to close, while working from home should be facilitated where possible, said Gulyas.

The [government](#) had been weighing a gradual lifting of pandemic restrictions in March, but the country's coronavirus statistics drastically worsened in recent weeks.

So far the virus has infected around 440,000 people and killed over 15,000.

Last month, Hungary broke ranks with the EU by becoming the first EU member to start rolling out the Chinese-made Sinopharm jab and Russia's Sputnik V vaccine.

Almost 800,000 Hungarians had received at least one vaccine dose by Thursday.

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