

OPINION OURS & YOURS

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EDITORIAL

We're a long way from old normal

THE Prime Minister's prognosis for life getting back to "normal" is not surprising, if a little depressing. Growing numbers of COVID-19 cases in India, Brazil and a handful of other countries is a frightening reminder of the threat that still exists from a virus we are yet to fully understand. The fragility of the situation in India is the reason the federal Government finds itself in the position of being branded racist over its lockdown policy. The government's critics have gleefully inflamed the racism conversation all the while conveniently ignoring the fact that bans and associated fines for those who ignore them have existed for all countries previously under strict COVID conditions, including the UK and China.

In a wide-ranging interview today ahead of Tuesday's budget, Mr Morrison seemed unfazed by the criticism, confident the best decision has been made in the interests of public health. The position is easy to justify when you overlay the pessimistic view the government has on international border closures, even as we edge closer to the day when a majority are vaccinated. Mr Morrison's assessment of non-essential international travel is unequivocal — it won't be happening any time soon. We cannot — and should not — cling to the notion of zero cases, but by the same token it won't be considered safe to open all the borders in the foreseeable future. When you strip the emotion from the current conversation about travel bans imposed on India, which is totally understandable and justifiable, the government is more than confident any relaxation of travel from that country is not what the majority of voters want.

They feel genuine sympathy for people in India, and not just the Australian cricketers, but if recent state election results have shown anything, it's that people feel comfortable about border restrictions — at least for now. And while the kneejerk state border closures are doing real damage to consumer confidence and economic recovery, the threat to public health from premature international border re-openings remains genuine. But with this headline view of "Fortress Australia" comes additional pressure on next week's budget, the first full fiscal plan since COVID began. There is a greater responsibility to produce a financial plan that looks to fill the economic gaps left by international tourists and students, and to stimulate industries that will inevitably struggle without foreign dollars. The government has already shown it is not afraid to keep spending to grow but the pressure will be on to spend in the right places.

Real values

MOTHER'S Day, for various reasons, remains one of the most loved days on the calendar, probably more than any other. But Mother's Day 2021 has a particularly potent message of strength, respect, connection and potential.

It comes after a year when many mums were separated from their families because of COVID, with many still unable to connect face-to-face.

It also comes against a backdrop of long overdue social anger about the treatment of women in every facet of life. There is a clear expectation that change is in the wind, and there will be widespread action if there isn't. But it's worth remembering today that at the centre of it all are the values that have always defined Mother's Day — community, resilience and humanity. Happy Mother's Day.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR ELECTION COMMENT TAKEN BY THE EDITOR, MICK CARROLL, 2 HOLT ST, SURRY HILLS 2010



MORE THAN A COSMETIC CHANGE

Regarding the article "Boob job by dentist" (ST, 2/5). This story could leave readers with an incorrect view of cosmetic surgery in Australia.

There are three types of medical practitioners who call themselves cosmetic surgeons: 1. Almost 50 Fellows of the ACCS who have up to 12 years' dedicated medical training, including two years' mandatory cosmetic-surgery-specific training. 2. About 500 plastic surgeons who may, or may not, have any specific cosmetic surgical training. 3. About 113,000 other fully registered medical practitioners with no specific cosmetic surgical training. For this reason, the ACCS has been calling on the Australian and state governments to provide a single credentialing process so that Australian patients can be assured the surgeon they see is properly trained. This would ensure that all doctors who call themselves cosmetic surgeons, including "cosmetic plastic surgeons", would need to have achieved an independently assessed benchmark of relevant training, qualifications and experience specifically in cosmetic surgery. They would also be subject to ongoing recertification requirements. Such a system would allow consumers to identify easily who is a trained, accredited and safe practitioner of cosmetic surgery from who is not. Incredibly, plastic surgeons are resisting this proposal, preferring to protect their own \$2 million-plus incomes by seeking to bar properly trained

LET THE PEOPLE IN

The hard work is done. We are now one of the only countries in the world to be COVID-free but we can't seem close off this brilliant outcome by getting our economy pumping with the much-needed money that opening international borders can afford. The risky hotel quarantine in high population cities needs to stop. The risk is far too much and the number of people you can let in far too little — at much expense to the people let in. There needs to be a large-scale operation, in a remote area, with planes landing there. Long enough, cheaper quarantines which means that they will be at no risk to the rest of the country

while it happens. This posturing by state and federal governments about who will pick up the tab is ridiculous. The states need the thousands of students who will get the universities back on their feet and the rental market kicking, which is dismal at the moment. For this to happen, we need scale. Today's trickle of international arrivals is not feasible and is a slow death for our economy. We cannot afford to be an insular economy for too long. Just pool the resources between the both of them and get the damn thing working.

SATISH CHIENGLATH
CROYDON PARK

expansionism has been going on for years but while they took everything Australia could export and bought up farms and ports, Australia wasn't interested in trying to halt it. New Zealand may regret not siding with Australia but it has the right to make decisions it thinks are best for it.

MARTIN TAUKEI
ENGADINE

IT'S LITTLE SENSE

When in 2011 the people of NSW elected the Liberal Barry O'Farrell government, I did not think they would destroy southeastern suburbs by giving the green light to build 1900 high-rise apartments in around 20 buildings up to 17 storeys at Little Bay and to redevelop Long Bay jail with 22-storey buildings. This will see an influx of 30,000 residents with no increase in transport infrastructure or schools. There is only a single lane on Anzac Pde from Little Bay to Maroubra. To make matters worse they have already destroyed TAFE by sacking teachers and closing TAFEs and replacing them with Controlled Learning Centres (CLCs). A CLC is basically a shopfront with a TV monitor where students can log in and do courses online. This is not foundational for a trade where safety for worker and consumer are paramount. The only reason Gladys Berejiklian is not doing anything about it is because Maroubra is a Labor electorate. She should realise 40 per cent of this electorate voted Liberal. I strongly recommend you go on the Save Little Bay website and see the disaster that is coming.

TONY MORRISSEY
CHIFLEY

above, should not be undertaking cosmetic surgery at all. Our proposed system would ensure they are unable to do so.

PATRICK TANSLEY
PRESIDENT, AUSTRALASIAN
COLLEGE OF COSMETIC SURGERY

COME ON, BRO

Stephanie Millar's letter last week about New Zealand not joining with Australia against China sounds a bit like: If you don't do as we want you to, you are on your own. That sounds like a hollow threat to me because what could or would Australia do if China threatened New Zealand's sovereignty? What really amazes me is that after all the years of being great mates and friendly rivals, Stephanie wants to give New Zealand the flick. Australia, along with a lot of other countries is paying for its reliance on China for trade and manufacturing. China's



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MAIL: Letters to the Editor,
The Sunday Telegraph,
Box 4245, GPO Sydney 2001

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