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UK on track for one of Europe's worst virus death tolls

London.—Britain is on track to record one of the worst coronavirus death tolls in Europe, after data published yesterday showed nationwide fatalities topped 24,000 nine days ago. A day after Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke of success in dealing with the outbreak, the new figures showed the week ending April 17 was Britain's deadliest since comparable records began in 1993.

The Office for National Statistics said 21,284 people had died in England by April 17 with mentions of COVID-19 on their death certificate. Together with figures from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the total United Kingdom death toll was at least 24,000 as of

April 19. "The United Kingdom is going to be right up there among the worst-hit nations in the initial surge," said Bill Hanage, associate professor of epidemiology at Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

"With the most optimistic views of the amount of immunity that might be being generated, it would be still not be close to having enough to be able to return to normal," he told Reuters. Unlike the hospital death tolls announced daily by the government, the fresh figures include deaths in community settings, such as care homes where overall fatalities have trebled in a few weeks.

Spain aims for end-June return to normality, to phase out coronavirus lockdown

- Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez announced yesterday a four-phase plan to lift the lockdown enforced on the nation to control one of the world's worst outbreaks of the coronavirus **with an aim to return to normality by the end of June.**

- The lifting of the strict measures will begin on May 4 and vary from region to region depending on factors such as how the rate of infection evolves, the number of intensive care beds available locally and how regions comply with distancing rules, he said. **See Page Four.**



Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez.,