The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
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Moscow Pleads for Private Clinics' Help in Coronavirus Fight

March 30, 2020



Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin named hospital beds and the national healthcare system's mobilization as top priorities in the country's fight against the pandemic. **Moskva News Agency**

Moscow's mayor has asked for the Russian government's help in getting private clinics to provide beds for coronavirus patients, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency reported Monday.

Mayor Sergei Sobyanin, who sits on Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin's coronavirus coordinating council, named hospital beds and the national healthcare system's mobilization as top priorities in the country's fight against the pandemic.

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"I would ask you to instruct us so that we could work through a network of private clinics that could provide such assistance," Sobyanin told Mishustin, according to RIA Novosti.

Officials have said that Russia plans to build new isolation units, based on close study of similar facilities built in China, for patients in several regions in response to the coronavirus' spread.

Moscow's hospital wards have been repurposed to treat patients with the virus. Patients diagnosed with the disease in Moscow as well as suspected cases are currently being admitted to one specially designated hospital in the Kommunarka area, as well as to backup wards in other city hospitals.

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Three private labs have started or plan to start testing for coronavirus this week, the Vedomosti business daily reported Monday. One of the labs reported accepting 13,000 requests in four days.

Russia has reported a total of 1,836 Covid-19 cases as of Monday, with nine deaths. Moscow accounts for more than 1,200 of the nation's coronavirus cases.

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