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Russia's Coronavirus Outbreak Is 'Changing for the Worse,' Putin Warns

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Russia has reported 18,328 overall coronavirus cases and 148 total deaths, making it the world's 15th most-affected country as of Monday. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

Russia's coronavirus outbreak is deteriorating and its new cases are getting more severe, President Vladimir Putin warned Monday as the country reported its highest day-to-day spike in infections to date.

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"We see that the situation is changing almost daily and, unfortunately, not for the better," Putin said at a video conference with health officials.

"The number of people who are getting sick is increasing, with more cases of severe illness,"

he told three federal officials and Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin, who is overseeing Russia's coronavirus task force.

Moscow, with 11,513 confirmed cases, accounts for an overwhelming majority of Russia's Covid-19 infections.

Sobyanin has warned that the outbreak was "nowhere near" its peak, while his deputy said that Moscow's hospitals and ambulances were stretched to the limit.

Russian health officials estimate the daily growth rate of infections at around 17% and say that other regions are around three weeks behind Moscow in case numbers.

Putin said Monday that Russia could draw on its millitary capacity to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

"What the Defense Ministry is using abroad is only a small fraction of what it has. We need to keep in mind that its main reserves are still in reserve," he said.

Putin has previously dismissed fears of a coronavirus outbreak, saying the situation in Russia was "under control."

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