The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Coronavirus Cases Surge Past One Million

September 01, 2020



Russia will begin the first mass deliveries of its vaccine this month. **Mikhail Metzel / TASS**

Russia surpassed 1 million cases of Covid-19 nationwide on Tuesday, making it the fourth country after the United States, Brazil and India to reach the milestone.

On Monday, Russia's Health Minister announced plans to begin the first mass deliveries of its coronavirus vaccine this month, as the country is racing to produce a vaccine against the disease that has infected 25.4 million and killed more than 850,000.

Despite the high coronavirus infection numbers, Russia's fatality rate has remained low compared with other badly hit countries, raising speculation that Moscow could be underreporting figures. Over the past 24 hours 123 people have died, bringing the total official death toll to 17,299.

However, separate figures recently published by Russia's statistics agency Rosstat found that the number of deaths from the virus could be much higher than the official tally, which is updated daily by the country's coronavirus task force.

Those figures show that almost 12,000 people with coronavirus died in June alone, with the virus confirmed or believed to be the main cause of death in more than 7,000 cases, while the task force figures showed only 4,880 for the same period.

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