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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Sets New Single-Day Coronavirus Deaths Record

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Moscow is the epicentre of Russia's outbreak. **Kirill Zhukov / Moskva News Agency**

Russia reported 346 deaths from Covid-19 Wednesday, the highest single-day death toll amid a record surge in cases as authorities strive to promote prevention methods while avoiding a total lockdown.

The new figure smashes the previous record of 320 Covid-19 deaths set only 24 hours ago.

Wednesday's increase brings Russia's overall Covid-19 death toll, as reported by the national information center that collates daily figures from regional centers, to 26,935. Monthly state statistics and experts have suggested that the real Covid-19 death toll is at least double that figure, which is currently the 13th-highest in the world.

A near-record 75 patients died from coronavirus in Moscow, the epicenter of Russia's Covid-19 outbreak that sees around a quarter of the country's coronavirus deaths every day. It fell three deaths short of an all-time high of 78 coronavirus fatalities on May 30.

The record daily death toll comes two days after Russia saw its highest daily increase with 17,347 new coronavirus infections. It added 16,202 new infections Wednesday. Russia's official number of coronavirus cases stands at 1,563,976, the fourth-highest in the world.

Russia announced a nationwide mask mandate starting Wednesday and advised restaurants and other night spots to close after 11 p.m. Moscow, which last week adopted a contact-tracing system requiring restaurant and nightclub visitors to register their phone numbers and scan QR codes, said it will not force its establishments to follow the guidelines.

Authorities introduced unpopular lockdown measures in the spring, including bans on non-essential walks outside, when Russia was seeing fewer than 10,000 daily Covid-19 cases on average. This time, they are opting for targeted measures and urging Russians to follow health guidelines while raising hopes of mass vaccine production in the next few months.

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