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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Confirms Record 24K Coronavirus Cases

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Russia became the fifth country to report 2 million Covid-19 diagnoses this week. **Sergei Bobylev / TASS**

Russia has confirmed more than 24,000 new infections for the first time since the pandemic hit the country eight months ago.

Russia's coronavirus information center confirmed a new record of 24,318 infections across all 85 regions Friday. Moscow, the epicenter of Russia's outbreak, recorded a new daily high of 6,902 cases as did St. Petersburg with 2,394.

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Almost a quarter of all those infected did not exhibit symptoms, the information center said.

Officials say infection rates per 100,000 people have more than doubled from 6.1 in October to 15.3 in November.

The national coronavirus caseload reached 2,039,926 one day after Russia became the fifth

country to report 2 million Covid-19 diagnoses.

Russia's coronavirus death toll rose to 35,311, a figure widely believed to be undercounted due to tallying methods, after 461 people died in the past 24 hours.

The virus has increasingly strained hospitals in the regions as the second wave has intensified, with severe shortages of hospital beds, staff and medicine reported across the country.

In recent weeks Russia has re-imposed a nationwide mask mandate and advised regional leaders to restrict hours for bars, nightclubs and other late-night establishments but has held off on wider lockdown measures, citing the need to keep businesses open.

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