Moscow, St. Petersburg Universities Go Remote as Virus Surges

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Russia's two largest cities make up nearly one-third of the country's 2.3 million infections. **Lev Vlasov / SOPA / ZUMA / TASS**

Universities in Moscow and St. Petersburg will switch students to remote learning for two months to prevent the spread of coronavirus during the pandemic's record-setting second wave, Science and Higher Education Minister Valery Falkov said Monday.

"I signed an order yesterday switching the universities under the ministry's jurisdiction in Moscow and St. Petersburg to the remote learning format," Falkov said, according to the RBC news website.

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The order is effective until Feb. 6, 2021.

Falkov had said in October that Russian universities would switch to remote learning based on

the epidemiological situations in their specific regions.

Russia's two largest cities are at the center of the second wave of Russia's Covid-19 outbreak with nearly one-third of the country's 2.3 million infections.

St. Petersburg's caseload has nearly quadrupled from fewer than 1,000 new cases per day in early November to some 3,700 infections per day over the past week.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin, meanwhile, has twice extended remote-learning orders for schoolchildren in grades 6-11 as part of Covid-19 measures during the second wave.

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