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Russia Marks New Covid Death Toll After Lifting Partial Lockdown

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

Russia set a new record for daily coronavirus deaths Tuesday as the country emerged from a weeklong paid holiday meant to curb the record-breaking spread of infections.

According to government figures, 1,211 people died from Covid in the past 24 hours.

Russia's total death toll based on daily figures now stands at 249,215 — Europe's highest.

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A Moscow Times analysis of the most recently available official statistics placed Russia's excess death toll since the start of the pandemic — and before the latest and deadliest wave of the virus took hold — at 723,350.

Another 39,160 people have been infected in the past 24 hours, the government tally said Tuesday.

That puts Russia's total caseload at 8.8 million, the fifth-highest in the world.

President Vladimir Putin had ordered the Oct. 30-Nov. 7 paid vacation for non-essential workers in a move to curb the unprecedented spread of Russia's Delta variant-driven fourth wave of the pandemic.

Though the infection growth rate slowed last week, Russia still counted its highest number of new coronavirus infections since the start of the pandemic on Saturday.

At least five Russian regions have extended their so-called "non-working" periods beyond Monday.

All 85 Russian regions have also mandated vaccinations for certain categories of workers in recent weeks.

With the weeklong holiday over, most Russian regions have left requirements in place for digital Covid passes to enter public areas and events.

The Kremlin said Monday that it is too early to assess the effect of Russia's "non-working period," adding that it will become clear during the week of Nov. 15.

Public health officials noted that the latest curbs only helped stabilize the spread of Covid-19, with ending the pandemic only possible by reaching herd immunity through vaccinations and recent recovery from the virus.

Only around one-third of Russians have been fully vaccinated with one of the country's several jabs with vaccine hesitancy still rampant two years into the pandemic, according to the independent Gogov monitor.

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