
'Example of infodemic': Moscow slams FT & NYT reports that put Russian Covid-19 death toll 70 percent higher than official data

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Russia's Foreign Ministry will send letters to the Financial Times and New York Times demanding they retract reports which claim the actual death toll from Covid-19 in the country is much higher than the official figures.

The editors-in-chief of those outlets will be handed the letters on Thursday through the Russian embassies in the UK and the US, ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said during a briefing.

Moscow will also address the UN, OSCE and UNESCO on the situation, as the reports in the FT and NYT represent *"an example of that very 'infodemic' that the UN General Secretary, Antonio Guterres, urged everybody to tackle."*

So-called *'infodemic'* or disinformation campaigns are as dangerous for humanity as the virus itself, the UN chief warned in late April, saying that the pandemic was the time to promote facts, not spread *"despair and division."* [Also on rt.com Lies, half-truths & propaganda: Even during Covid-19 crisis, Britain's leading news source can't resist Russia-bashing](#)

Earlier, a parliamentary commission on meddling in Russia's internal affairs warned that the publication of these stories may well see the two outlets losing their accreditation in Russia altogether.

The Financial Times and New York Times both published articles on Monday claiming that the Covid-19 death toll in Russia could be 70 percent higher than the official figure, which now stands at 2,212 people.

In their report, the New York Times cited independent demographer, Aleksei Raksha, who got his numbers by interpreting official data released by the Moscow authorities. The man, who is a TV personality in Russia, isn't affiliated with any official body or research institute.

The Financial Times insisted that they've carried out their own analysis of the Moscow records, which, according

to the outlet, showed "*a spike in all-cause mortality*" during the pandemic compared to previous years.
