
Florida cases surge for fifth day

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US state of Florida has reported over 12,000 new cases of the virus, the fifth day in a row the state has announced over 10,000 new infections, even as President Donald Trump pledged that the virus was coming under control.

The virus has claimed over 140,000 US lives total since the pandemic started, and Florida, California, Texas and other southern and western states shatter records every day.

Despite record levels of new cases nationwide, the Trump administration is pushing for school to reopen in a few weeks and resisting a federal mandate to wear masks in public.

President Trump defended his handling of the pandemic in an interview broadcast on Sunday, including his statement that there were only embers of the virus popping up around the country.

Turkey's total recoveries reach 202,010

An average of 1,000 patients in Turkey recover from coronavirus every day and as many new cases are reported, the country's health minister has said.

A total of 997 more recoveries from coronavirus were reported in the country over the past 24 hours, bringing the tally to over 202,010, Fahrettin Koca wrote on Twitter citing Health Ministry data.

"Our target: an increase in the number of recoveries, a decrease in the number of new cases," he added.

The nationwide count of infections rose to 219,641, as 924 more cases were reported over the past 24 hours.

The country's death toll from the virus rose to 5,491, with 16 new fatalities reported.

Healthcare professionals conducted a total of 41,310 tests for the disease in the past day, raising the overall count to over 4.27 million.

Nigeria's foreign minister tests positive

Nigerian Foreign Minister Geoffrey Onyeama said he had tested positive for the virus, the first member of President Muhammadu Buhari's cabinet to contract the new virus.

Onyeama, 64, said in a tweet he had taken a test because of throat irritation.

"Did my fourth Covid-19 test yesterday at the first sign of a throat irritation and unfortunately this time it came back positive," he tweeted. "Heading for isolation in a health facility and praying for the best."

Turkey suspends Iran and Afghanistan flights

Turkey has suspended flights from Iran and Afghanistan in the wake of the pandemic, according to the Transport and Infrastructure Ministry.

"Flights to Iran and Afghanistan from Turkey have been suspended by our government as part of preventive measures against coronavirus," said the ministry in a statement.

Cubans celebrate no local transmission for first time in four months

Cuba for the first time in 130 days said there were no new domestic

cases as most of the country moved into the final phase of resuming normal activities with masks and social distancing.

Francisco Duran, head of epidemiology at the Ministry of Public Health, and who has updated the country daily on the pandemic, took off his mask during the national broadcast for only the second time deliver the good news.

Only a handful of cases were reported in Cuba over the last week, all in Havana. Most of the Caribbean island, home to 11.2 million inhabitants, has been free of the disease for more than a month.

Iran reports 2,182 new cases, 209 more deaths

Iran has recorded 2,182 new coronavirus cases and 209 more deaths.

Iran, which remains the Middle East's worst-hit country by the virus pandemic, now has a total of 273,656 Covid-19 infections and 14,188 total deaths.

Iranian health officials play down president's figure

Iranian health officials have sought to play down the president's estimate that some 25 million people have been infected with the coronavirus, saying it was based on serological blood tests that measure exposure to the illness and that cannot be relied on to show the current state of disease.

The 25 million figure put forward by Rouhani on Saturday is nearly a third of the population and massively higher than the official number of Covid-19 cases.

A Health Ministry statement carried by Iranian news media said the figure given by the president was based on numbers produced by a deputy in the ministry.

"It is not possible to rely on serological tests to diagnose the current state of the disease," the statement said.

In announcing the 25 million estimate on Saturday, Rouhani did not say what the figure was based on, but added that 30-35 million more were possibly at risk.

A coronavirus task force official said Saturday the 25 million were "mildly affected patients who ... did not need to seek medical advice".

Hong Kong virus spread 'critical' – Carrie Lam

Hong Kong's leader says coronavirus was spreading out of control in the city as she announced a record daily high of more than 100 cases and ordered new social distancing measures.

"I think the situation is really critical and there is no sign the situation is being brought under control," chief executive Carrie Lam told reporters.

Cases slow as Pakistan readies anti-polio drive

Pakistani authorities reported 1,579 new Covid-19 cases, the lowest number in more than a month, as health officials plan to resume a much-awaited nationwide anti-polio campaign next week.

Authorities conducted 22,559 tests in the past 24 hours. The additional cases bring to 263,500 the total number of confirmed infections, out of which 53,652 are active.

Pakistan has reported 5,568 deaths.

The improvement in infections coincides with Monday's three-day anti-polio drive that aims to reach 800,000 children.

Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria are the three countries where polio — a disabling and life-threatening disease caused by the polio virus — is still endemic.

Philippines records 58 deaths, 2,241 new cases

The Philippines' health department has reported 58 deaths related to Covid-19 and 2,241 additional infections of the new coronavirus.

Total deaths now stand at 1,831, with 67,456 confirmed cases, it said in a bulletin.

The Philippines recorded 162 Covid-19 deaths a week ago, the highest daily rise in Southeast Asia so far.

India records biggest one-day surge of near 39,000

A record 24-hour surge of 38,902 new cases has taken India's coronavirus total to 1,077,618.

The Health Ministry also reported 543 additional deaths for a total of 26,816.

The number of people who have recovered continues to grow. The Health Ministry data shows 677,422 patients have been cured so far

across the country, putting the recovery rate at 62.82 percent.

Experts say India is likely to witness a series of peaks as the infection spread in rural areas.

Australian city makes mask-wearing compulsory

Australia's second-biggest city has made it compulsory to wear a mask in public as Melbourne steps up efforts to bring a coronavirus outbreak under control.

Victoria state, which includes Melbourne, now has nearly 3,000 active cases of Covid-19 after a further 363 infections were reported Sunday despite a 10-day lockdown.

Premier Daniel Andrews said more than five million people in Melbourne and neighbouring Mitchell Shire would be required to wear a mask or other face-covering in public spaces from midnight Wednesday into Thursday.

Failure to comply with the new rule will mean a Aus\$200 (\$140) fine – though Andrews said "common sense" discretion would be applied to activities such as running or visiting a bank.

The decision makes Melbourne the first place in the country to mandate the use of face-coverings.

Mask-wearing is not common in Australia and has not been part of the country's Covid-19 response until now.

Australia has reported almost 12,000 cases of Covid-19 nationwide and 122 deaths in a population of about 25 million.

South Korea reports 34 new cases

South Korea has reported less than 40 additional cases of the coronavirus for a second straight day, as authorities struggle to suppress an uptick in local infections.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said it has reported 34 additional cases, raising the country's total to 13,745 with 295 deaths.

The agency says 21 of the newly confirmed cases were domestically infected patients, all of them found in the densely populated Seoul area or two central cities. It says the rest 13 cases were from overseas.

South Korea on Saturday recorded 39 new cases.

Germany's cases rise by 202 to 201,574

The number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Germany have increased by 202 to 201,574, data from the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) for infectious diseases showed.

The reported death toll rose by 1 to 9,084, the tally showed.

China reports 16 new cases

Mainland China reported 16 new cases of the novel coronavirus as of the end of July 18, up from 22 reported a day earlier, the Chinese national health authority said.

Of the new infections, 13 were found in Urumqi, the capital of China's far western region of Xinjiang.

The other three, recorded in the southern province of Guangdong and eastern province of Shandong, were imported infection involving travellers from overseas, according to the National Health Commission (NHC) and Xinjiang local health commission.

On Saturday, mainland China recorded a total of 42 new asymptomatic cases, including 18 new asymptomatic patients in Urumqi.

As of Saturday, mainland China had 83,660 confirmed coronavirus cases, the national health authority said.

The death toll remained at 4,634.

Mexico reports 7,615 new cases , 578 more deaths

Mexico's Health Ministry on Saturday reported 7,615 new confirmed coronavirus infections and 578 additional fatalities, bringing the total in the country to 338,913 cases and 38,888 deaths.

The government has said the real number of infected people is likely significantly higher than the confirmed cases.

WHO posts second daily record for new cases in row

The World Health Organization (WHO) is again posting a single-day record of new confirmed coronavirus cases. It announced 259,848 new cases.

The WHO on Friday posted more than 237,000 confirmed cases around the world. The back-to-back records come as many nations struggle

with new waves of infections after loosening lockdown restrictions.

Data compiled by Johns Hopkins University show more than 14 million cases worldwide since the start of the pandemic, with nearly 600,000 deaths.

South Africa now 5th in world for infections

South Africa now ranks fifth in the world for confirmed coronavirus cases caseload as the African continent faces the pandemic's first wave head-on.

South Africa on Saturday reported 13,285 new confirmed cases for a total of 350,879. That puts the country ahead of Peru and makes up roughly half the cases in Africa. The only four countries with more confirmed cases — the US, Brazil, India, and Russia — all have far more people than South Africa's 57 million.

The virus arrived on the continent a little later than elsewhere, giving officials more time to prepare, but Africa has fewer health care resources than any other region and South Africa's public hospitals struggle to handle the growing number of patients.

Gauteng province, home to Johannesburg and the capital, Pretoria, is now Africa's epicentre for the virus. It has one-quarter of the country's population and many of the poor are crowded in township areas with inadequate access to clean water and sanitation.

South Africa has seen 4,948 reported virus deaths, but the South African Medical Research Council in its most recent report shows the country had 10,944 "excess deaths" between May 6 and July 7.

US CDC reports cases rise nearly 75,000

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported 3,630,587 cases of new coronavirus, an increase of 74,710 cases, and said the number of deaths had risen by 918 to 138,782.

The CDC reported its tally of cases of the respiratory illness known as Covid-19, caused by a new coronavirus, compared to a day earlier.

The CDC figures do not necessarily reflect cases reported by individual states.

Brazil's Bolsonaro says restrictions kill economy

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro said on Saturday that lockdown

measures used to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus "kill" and have "suffocated" the country's economy.

"Without salaries and jobs, people die," he said referring to restrictions imposed by some states and municipalities. "Lockdown kills," he added, saying that some politicians have suffocated the economy with forced curfews.

The president's statement comes as Brazil's economy is expected to contract 6.4% this year, hit by the pandemic.

Brazil registered 28,532 new confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus and 921 new deaths on Saturday, the health ministry said. Total cases in Brazil, the world's second most affected country after the United States, have now risen to 2,074,860 while deaths totalled 78,772.
