

Coronavirus pandemic continues to sweep across globe, as death toll nears 70,000



Havana, April 6 (RHC)-- The global death toll from the coronavirus pandemic has now reached 69,498 and 1,275,542 people are diagnosed with the viral infection around the globe, according to data collected by Johns Hopkins University.

The pandemic has also prompted many countries to ban large gatherings and enforce obligatory social distancing, confining billions of people to their homes and making it impossible for many businesses to continue.

Here's a summary of the latest related developments from around the world, specifically in Europe and Asia.

Spain's death toll rose by 674 on Sunday to 12,641, according to officials, who said it was down from Saturday's 809 and well below Thursday's record of 950. The country's positive cases rose by 6,023 to 131,646 on Sunday, the Health Ministry said.

"The data from this week and today confirms the slowing down of infections," Health Minister Salvador Illa told a news conference. "The data confirms that confinement is working." Meanwhile, government ministers warned that it was too early to say when the country could start lifting its lockdown on public life. Spain began its fourth week under a near-total lockdown on Monday.

Italy, the worst-hit country in the world, reported its lowest daily death toll in more than two weeks on Sunday. Health officials reported 525 deaths from the disease on Sunday, which was the smallest daily increase since the epidemic broke out in northern Italy about six weeks ago. The number of patients in badly stretched intensive care units also fell for a second day running on Sunday.

The total number of positive cases of COVID-19 rose by 4,316 to 128,948, the lowest increase in five days. "The curve has reached a plateau and begun to descend," said Silvio Brusaferrò, the head of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Italy's top health institute. "If this is confirmed, we need to start thinking about the second phase and keep down the spread of this disease," he added.

Health Minister Roberto Speranza, however, said it was too early to say when the national lockdown could be lifted. He said that the lockdown, which has strictly limited people's movements and frozen all non-essential economic activity, would officially last until at least April 13. It is widely expected to be extended then, as well, he said.

Germany confirmed on Monday that its cases of coronavirus infection had risen by 3,677 in the past 24 hours to 100,123. That was the fourth straight drop in the daily numbers of new cases, according to data from the Robert Koch Institute for infectious diseases. The reported death toll rose by 92 to 1,584.

Health officials in the Netherlands said 115 people died of the illness on Sunday, bringing the country's total toll to 1,766. Confirmed cases of COVID-19 also went up by 1,224 to 17,953.

In Asia, South Korea reported 47 new infections on Monday. It was the lowest daily number of cases reported in the country since February, when it became the second hotspot of the disease after China. Health officials reported three additional deaths on Monday. South Korea has reported a total of 10,284 positive cases and 186 deaths, according to data from the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In the United Kingdom, nearly 47,800 have tested positive for the virus and more than 4,900 have died so far. Meanwhile, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was admitted to hospital for tests on Sunday in what Downing Street said was a "precautionary step" because he was showing persistent symptoms of the coronavirus 10 days after testing positive for it.

The coronavirus has so far affected more than 336,000 people in the United States and killed over 9,600. But the New York Times said in a report that hospital officials, public health experts and medical examiners were of the opinion that official counts did not represent the true number of American fatalities. "The undercount is a result of inconsistent protocols, limited resources and a patchwork of decision-making from one state or county to the next," the paper said.

Meanwhile, President Donald Trump expressed hope on Sunday that the U.S. was seeing a "leveling-off" of the coronavirus crisis in some of the nation's hot spots. He said that Americans were starting to see "the light at the end of the tunnel."

The government of Barbados says the United States has seized a consignment of medical equipment Bridgetown had ordered and paid for. The shipment of 20 ventilators "were seized in the United States. Paid for, but seized, so we are trying to see exactly what is going to transpire there," Minister of Health and Wellness Jeffrey Bostic told reporters at a press conference.

China reported 39 new cases of COVID-19 on Monday, according to the National Health Commission (NHC), which said most of the cases had been imported. There were also 78 new asymptomatic cases, where people tested positive for the virus but did not show any symptoms. There have been a total number 81,700 confirmed cases in China since the disease first emerged there in late December. Over 77,000 people have recovered, and 3,331 have people succumbed to the respiratory illness caused by the new virus.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will declare a state of emergency in the capital, Tokyo, and other major cities, on Tuesday, local media reported Monday. He will give his governors stronger legal authority to urge people to stay home and businesses to close.

A total number of 3, 654 cases have been diagnosed in South Korea, including 1,000 cases in Tokyo. The country has also reported 85 deaths.

Singapore has quarantined around 19,800 foreign workers already housed in two dormitories for 14 days, the Health Ministry said on Monday. It said the decision had been made after the number of positive cases grew in those places. The South-Asian nation has reported 1,309 cases of infection, along with six deaths.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/218923-coronavirus-pandemic-continues-to-sweep-across-globe-as-death-toll-nears-70000>



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