

# *Israeli health minister says virus may kill 40,000 after Netanyahu brags about healthcare system*

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Tel Aviv, March 27 (RHC)-- Up to 40,000 people may lose their lives due to the COVID-19 disease in Israel, the regime's health ministry predicted, after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu boasted that Israelis were fully protected against the pandemic.

Israel's leading daily Haaretz on Thursday reported the results of a study conducted by the regime's health ministry regarding the eventual number of COVID-19 fatalities presented to Netanyahu earlier this week.

The study, carried out by Dr. Michael Assaf and Professor Yinon Ashkenazy of the Hebrew University's Racah Institute of Physics, forecast a scenario where almost half of Israel's population will be infected by the new coronavirus, with a death rate of 0.7 to 1 percent.

According to the prediction, 0.4 percent of Israelis, or up to 40,000 people, will eventually die should the regime not do anything effective in curbing the spread of the coronavirus.

The COVID-19 disease, caused by the new coronavirus, emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan late last year and is currently affecting 198 countries and territories across the globe. It has so far affected more than 488,500 people and killed over 22,000.

Some 1,262 Israeli army soldiers are quarantined on suspicions of a new coronavirus infection as the flu-like virus spreads across the globe. Assaf, the leading author of the research and an expert in statistical physics and particle interactions, predicted that the current situation -- a partial shutdown across the territories -- will result in a peak of over 10,000 critically ill COVID-19 patients who will need respirators on a given day.

However, since the regime does not possess enough respirators, lots of these patients will lose their lives, and the outbreak will eventually kill between 20,000 and 25,000 victims. Under this scenario, the pandemic will peak in two months.

As of Thursday, more than 2,660 people have tested positive in Israel and eight others died.

Israel has given its spy agency Shin Bet the green light to use "counter-terrorism" operations against those infected with a new coronavirus, treating the pandemic as a security menace.

According to Assaf's forecasts, the disease is likely to claim the lives of two million people in Italy, and 11 million people in the United States. To date, Italy is ranked first in terms of fatalities, which is more than 7,500. Spain is the second with more than 4,080 deaths and China the third, with more than 3,280 deaths.

The United States has reported more than 68,590 confirmed cases and over 1,030 deaths.

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