

France expands curfews to cover 46 million people as COVID-19 cases set new daily record

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Empty streets in Montmartre during the Covid-19 curfew in Paris. (Photo: Reuters / Charles Platiau)

Paris, October 23 (RHC)-- Coronavirus curfews in France will be extended to include some two-thirds of the population, with the country reporting a record 41,622 new confirmed cases of the disease in one 24-hour period.

French Prime Minister Jean Castex said the curfews that were imposed in Paris and eight other major cities last week will be expanded to 38 more departments. That means 46 million out of the country's 67 million population will be barred from leaving their homes between 9 pm and 6 am.

The country has found itself in a "serious situation" due to the second wave of the coronavirus and that is continuing to "degrade," Castex said. The number of cases increased by 40 percent over the past week, while the number of infections has been doubling every 15 days.

"No one can consider themselves safe from this, even young people," Castex insisted, urging the public to wear a mask, wash their hands, and follow social distancing rules.

Shortly after the restrictions were announced, the French health authorities said a record 41,622 cases were registered in the country on Wednesday. The overall number of infections has now reached 999,043, meaning that, on Friday, France will become the second European nation after Spain to cross the one million mark.

The death toll from the disease in the country now stands at 34,210, with 162 fatalities occurring in the past 24 hours. The number of severe COVID-19 cases that require hospitalization was also up, growing by 847 to a total of 14,032.

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