

India tallies third-highest corona cases but death rate low



A healthcare worker checks the temperature of residents of a slum area using an electronic thermometer during a check-up campaign for the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), in Mumbai, India



A worker rests as he builds a High Dependency Unit (HDU) at a COVID-19 care centre in New Delhi



A health worker wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) carries the body of a person who died due to COVID-19 on a handcart at a crematorium in New Delhi

Reuters | New Delhi/Mumbai

India yesterday overtook Russia to record the world's third-highest number of coronavirus infections at nearly 700,000, even as its hardest-hit state said it will allow hotels to reopen this week.

Health ministry data from the world's second-most populous country showed more than 23,000 new cases on Monday, down slightly from Sunday's record increase of almost 25,000. There have been almost 20,000 deaths in India since the first case was detected there in January.

India now trails only the United States and Brazil in the number of COVID-19 cases and it has recorded eight times as many cases as China, where the virus was first identified in late 2019.

But its death rate per 10,000 people is still a low 0.15, compared with 3.97 in the United States and 6.65 in the United Kingdom, according to a Reuters tally. Mainland China stands at 0.03.

Officials said they had reversed a decision to reopen the Taj Mahal, India's most famous tourist attraction, in

the city of Agra, on Monday, following a rise in new cases in the area.

Some other monuments in and around the capital New Delhi opened on Monday, albeit with very few visitors. India is pushing ahead with relaxations to its more than two-month lockdown amid grim economic forecasts.

New Delhi, along with Maharashtra, home to India's financial capital Mumbai, and the southern state of Tamil Nadu account for about 60% of the total coronavirus cases in the country.

Maharashtra - the worst-hit state with nearly 210,000 cases - said it would let hotels outside containment zones reopen at 33% capacity from Wednesday and issued guidelines for staff and guests.

India is also seeing an uptake in cases in states such as Kerala, Karnataka and Assam, which until recently had been relatively unscathed.

"This is showing up as an urban health challenge," said Dr Rajib Dasgupta, a professor of community health at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, noting it is exposing weaknesses in the public health system.

Pakistan's health minister tests positive for Coronavirus

● Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi tested positive a few days back

● Minister for Railways Sheikh Rasheed and the speaker, Asad Qaiser also contracted the virus

● 48 doctors resigned in the eastern city of Lahore

Reuters | Islamabad/Lahore



Pakistan's Health Minister, Zafar Mirza (R), interacts with the mother of a Pakistani student, who is stuck in the locked down Hubei province at the center of China's coronavirus outbreak, as people demand evacuation of their children during a meeting in Islamabad, Pakistan

Mirza said on Twitter.

Pakistan has so far confirmed more than 229,831 cases with 4,762 deaths, according to government figures. The country has continued to confirm around 4,000 new cases per day, despite daily testing numbers falling.

A number of high level officials have tested positive in Pakistan, including Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi who announced he had the virus on Friday, just days after meeting with US Special Envoy for

Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad.

The Minister for Railways Sheikh Rasheed and the speaker of the lower house of parliament, Asad Qaiser have also contracted the virus.

On Monday, 48 doctors resigned in the eastern city of Lahore, one of the hardest hit areas by the virus. Salman Haseeb, president of the Young Doctors Association for Punjab, said the resignations were due to low morale in the stretched health system due to poor working conditions.

“I have tested positive for COVID-19. Under (medical) advice I have isolated myself at home & taking all precautions. I have mild symptoms. Please keep me in your kind prayers

ZAFAR MIRZA
STATE MINISTER OF HEALTH

“See the lack of seriousness of the government during the deadly pandemic that it is accepting resignations instead of addressing the doctors' problems at this critical time when more doctors are much needed in Pakistan,” he said.

The spokesman for the Punjab Health Department, Syed Hammad Raza, said that the resignations were not related to COVID-19 and were due to personal reasons, and that doctors had enough protective equipment and received extra bonuses for working during the pandemic.

Mexican police arrest 3 over rehab attack that killed 27

● The attack was part of an ongoing battle between rival cartels

AFP | Mexico City

Mexican police have arrested three men over a bloody gun attack on a drug rehabilitation center that left 27 people dead, the local prosecutor's office said Sunday.

Gunmen burst into the centre in the city of Irapuato in the central Guanajuato state on Wednesday, forcing victims “onto the ground and shot them”, authorities said.

The suspects were captured in a swoop by special forces, the prosecutor's office said on Twitter, calling the incident a “heinous crime.”

Mexico's President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has condemned the attack -- the deadliest of its kind this year in the country. The original death toll was 24, but three of those who were injured have since died.

The president called on the Guanajuato government, which is in opposition hands, to investigate whether the violence could be partly due to “conspiracy” between local authorities and criminal gangs.

According to local media, the attack was part of an ongoing battle between rival cartels.

The presence of large-scale energy infrastructure in Guanajuato has attracted gangs such as the Santa Rosa de Lima cartel, which deals in stolen fuel and is battling the powerful Jalisco New Generation cartel for control of the lucrative trade.

On June 21, authorities said they had captured 26 suspected



The attack was condemned by Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador

members of the Santa Rosa de Lima cartel, which responded by setting up blockades of burning vehicles in three cities.

Several days earlier six members of one family, including a minor, had been murdered in the city of Celaya, one of those where the gang set up roadblocks.

Wednesday's attack was the second-most lethal assault since Lopez Obrador came to power in December 2018, after 28 people were killed at a bar in the eastern state of Veracruz last August.

Since December 2006 when the then-government launched a military operation against drug trafficking gangs, more than 290,000 people have been murdered, according to official figures.



The main cartels in Mexico?

La Familia Cartel
Tijuana Cartel.
Beltran-Leyva Cartel.
Sinaloa Cartel.
Juarez Cartel.
La Familia Michoacana.
Gulf Cartel.
Los Zetas.

Sinaloa Cartel

The United States Intelligence Community considers the Sinaloa Cartel “the most powerful drug trafficking organization in the world” and in 2011, the Los Angeles Times called it “Mexico's most powerful organized crime group.”

