# Iran reports 97 new virus deaths, taking total to 611

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Iran said on Saturday that the novel coronavirus has claimed 97 more lives, raising the country's total to 611, as the number of confirmed cases jumped again.

Health ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour said that "1,365 fresh cases have been added to the number of confirmed infections in the past 24 hours", bringing the total to 12,729.

Jahanpour told a televised news conference that more than 4,300 of those with confirmed infections had recovered so far.

Tehran province had the highest number of new cases with 347, followed by Isfahan with 155 and the northern region of Alborz with 134.

"Naturally, the number of confirmed cases will increase" even more as Iran steps up its laboratory sampling and tests, he said.

The outbreak in Iran is one of the deadliest outside of China, where the disease originated.

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