

# US nears China's virus death toll as New York calls for help

March 31 2020, by Nick Perry and Jocelyn Noveck

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Health officials spray disinfectant in a Kampung Baru, traditional Malay village, in Kuala Lumpur city center as a safety precaution against the new coronavirus, Tuesday, March 31, 2020. The Malaysian government issued a restricted movement order to the public for the rest of the month to help curb the spread of the coronavirus. (AP Photo/Vincent Thian)

The mounting death toll from the virus outbreak in the United States had it poised Tuesday to overtake China's grim toll of 3,300 deaths, with New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo saying up to 1 million more healthcare workers were needed. "Please come help us," he urged.

Hard-hit Italy and Spain have already overtaken China and now account for more than half of the nearly 38,000 COVID-19 deaths worldwide, according to figures from Johns Hopkins University.

But the World Health Organization warned Tuesday that while attention has shifted to epicenters in Western Europe and North America, the coronavirus pandemic was far from over in Asia.

"This is going to be a long-term battle and we cannot let down our guard," said Dr Takeshi Kasai, the WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific. "We need every country to keep responding according to their local situation."

In Japan, the countdown clocks were reset and ticking again for the Tokyo Olympics after organizers announced new dates following the postponement from this summer. The clocks read 479 days to go, with the games now scheduled to kick off on July 23, 2021.

In New York City, Cuomo and [health officials](#) warned Monday that the crisis unfolding there is just a preview of what other U.S. communities could soon face. New York State's death toll climbed by more than 250 people in a day Monday to more than 1,200, most of them in the city.



People wearing face masks ride an escalator near a winged statue at an upscale shopping mall in Beijing, Tuesday, March 31, 2020. China on Tuesday reported just one new death from the coronavirus and a few dozen new cases, all brought from overseas. (AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein)

"We've lost over one thousand New Yorkers," Cuomo said. "To me, we're beyond staggering already."

Even before the governor's appeal, close to 80,000 former nurses, doctors and other professionals were stepping up to volunteer, and a Navy hospital ship had arrived with 1,000 beds to relieve pressure on overwhelmed hospitals.

News also came of the first U.S. service member to die from the disease.



Secretary of Defense Mark Esper said the death of the New Jersey Army National Guardsman strengthened their resolve to work more closely with partners to stop the spread of COVID-19.

"This is a stinging loss for our military community," Esper said in a release.

More than 235 million people—about two of every three Americans—live in the 33 states where governors have declared statewide orders or recommendations to stay home.



A man is reflected in a mirror as vendors set up their stalls at the start of the day in a street market in Mexico City, Saturday, March 28, 2020, as business is reduced amid the spread of the new coronavirus. (AP Photo/Rebecca Blackwell)

In California, officials put out a similar call for medical volunteers as coronavirus hospitalizations doubled over the last four days and the number of patients in [intensive care](#) tripled.

"Challenging times are ahead for the next 30 days, and this is a very vital 30 days," President Donald Trump told reporters Monday. "The more we dedicate ourselves today, the more quickly we will emerge on the other side of the crisis."

In contrast, the crisis is continuing to ease in China. On Tuesday, officials in the world's most populous nation reported just 48 new COVID-19 cases, all of them brought from overseas.

In Wuhan, people were ready to jump, cry and "revenge shop" as the Chinese city once at the center of the global [virus outbreak](#) reopened.

"I'm so excited, I want to cry," said one woman at the Chuhe Hanjie pedestrian mall, where about 75% of the shops had reopened. Shopkeepers were limiting the number of people they were letting in, dispensing hand sanitizer and checking customers for signs of fever.



Volunteer workers in a clothing factory manufacturing firefighting gear, make hospital gowns for medical staff to protect them from the coronavirus, in Arnedo, northern Spain, Monday, March 30, 2020. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Alvaro Barrientos)

More than three-quarters of a million people worldwide have become infected and over 37,000 have died, according to Johns Hopkins.

For most people, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. But for others, especially [older adults](#) and people with existing health problems, the virus can cause severe symptoms like pneumonia. More than 160,000 people have recovered,



according to Johns Hopkins.

Italy and Spain saw their death tolls climb by more than 800 each on Monday, but the WHO's emergency chief said cases there were "potentially stabilizing." At the same time, he warned against letting up on tough containment measures.

"We have to now push the virus down, and that will not happen by itself," Dr. Michael Ryan said.

Italy's death toll climbed to nearly 11,600. But in a bit of positive news, the numbers showed a continued slowdown in the rate of new confirmed cases and a record number of people recovered.



Health official spray disinfectant on Kampung Baru, a traditional Malay village in Kuala Lumpur city center as a safety precaution against the new coronavirus, Tuesday, March 31, 2020. The Malaysian government issued a restricted movement order to the public for the rest of the month to help curb the spread of the new coronavirus. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Vincent Thian)

"We are saving lives by staying at home, by maintaining social distance, by traveling less and by closing schools," said Dr. Luca Richeldi, a lung specialist.

At least six of Spain's 17 regions were at their limit of intensive care unit beds, and three more were close to it, authorities said. Crews of workers were frantically building more field hospitals.

Nearly 15% of all those infected in Spain, almost 13,000 people, are health care workers, hurting hospitals' efforts to help the tsunami of people gasping for breath.

Tenor Placido Domingo said Monday he is resting at home after catching the new [coronavirus](#).

"I feel fine," Domingo said in a statement.

The 79-year-old was reportedly hospitalized in Mexico after publicly acknowledging on March 22 that he had tested positive for COVID-19 and said he was going into isolation. He'd suffered from a fever and a cough.





A worker disinfects the doors of the closed Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem's Old City, as general public movements are limited to prevent the spread of coronavirus, Monday, March 30, 2020. (AP Photo/Mahmoud Illean)



Hundreds of people sit in their cars watching a movie trailer at a drive-in cinema, as all other theaters in Germany are closed due to the coronavirus in Essen, Germany, on Monday, March 30, 2020. Only two persons are allowed per car, tickets are available only online and no snacks are sold to limit social contacts. The new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Martin Meissner)





A soldier patrols an empty road amid government restrictions that limit residents, based on their national ID number, to essential shopping in the morning in an attempt to contain the spread of the new coronavirus in La Paz, Bolivia, Monday, March 30, 2020. COVID-19 causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness or death. (AP Photo/Juan Karita)





The Navy hospital ship USNS Comfort passes lower Manhattan on its way to docking in New York, Monday, March 30, 2020. The ship has 1,000 beds and 12 operating rooms that could be up and running within 24 hours of its arrival on Monday morning. It's expected to bolster a besieged health care system by treating non-coronavirus patients while hospitals treat people with COVID-19. (AP Photo/Seth Wenig)



A journalist records speakers at a press briefing following the arrival of the USNS Comfort, a naval hospital ship with a 1,000 bed-capacity, Monday, March 30, 2020, at Pier 90 in New York. The ship will be used to treat patients who do not have the new coronavirus as land-based hospitals fill up to capacity with those that do. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)



A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter flies overhead as the USNS Comfort, a naval hospital ship with a 1,000 bed-capacity, docks at Pier 90, Monday, March 30, 2020, in New York. The ship will be used to treat New Yorkers who don't have coronavirus as land-based hospitals fill up with and treat those who do. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens)

The opera singer's illness comes after his own glittering career had recently been marred by sexual misconduct revelations.

Israel said 70-year-old Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is quarantining himself after an aide tested positive for the virus. And In Britain, Prince Charles, the heir to the throne who tested positive, ended his period of isolation and is in good health, his office said.



Moscow, meanwhile, locked down its 12 million people as Russia braced for sweeping nationwide restrictions.

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Citation: US nears China's virus death toll as New York calls for help (2020, March 31) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-03-nears-china-virus-death-toll.html>

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