

South Korea sees lowest new virus infections for 2 weeks

March 9 2020

South Korea, which has one of the world's largest coronavirus totals outside China, on Monday reported its smallest daily rise in cases for two weeks.

A total of 248 cases were confirmed on Sunday, the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) said.

The increase took its total to 7,382. Each morning, the South announces how many cases were diagnosed the previous day, and gives an update every afternoon with the current day's figures so far.

Sunday's figure fell for the fourth day in a row and was the lowest since late February.

The South was the first country to report significant [coronavirus](#) numbers outside China, where the disease first emerged.

But in recent days the focus of global concern has been moving towards Italy and Iran, a quarter of Italy's population in lockdown Sunday as Rome announced infections soaring past 7,000 and deaths spiking to 366.

The South has had 51 deaths, according to KCDC. Specialists say a key factor behind the South's much lower fatality rate from the virus relates to the pattern of people being infected.

Most of the South's cases are connected to the Shincheonji Church of Jesus, a secretive religious group often condemned as a cult, many of whose members are women in their 20s and 30s.

But global figures show the virus is most deadly among older population groups, and in men in particular.

Scores of events in the South—from K-pop concerts to sports matches—have been cancelled or postponed over the contagion, with school and kindergarten breaks extended by three weeks nationwide.

Hundreds of churches held online services on Sunday.

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