

WHO points to 'slow decline' in Russia virus cases

June 3 2020



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The World Health Organisation said on Wednesday the number of coronavirus cases was slowly declining in Russia as the Kremlin prepared to stage a vote to change the constitution.

"We are seeing a good, albeit slow, decline" in the number of infections in Russia including the capital Moscow, said WHO Russia representative Melita Vujnovic.

"We are hoping that the epidemic will continue to decline further," she told reporters.

This week President Vladimir Putin said a delayed vote on constitutional reforms allowing him to potentially stay in power beyond 2024 would be held on July 1.

He ordered officials to pay "special attention" to [safety issues](#) in organising the vote but stressed that the country had passed the peak of contagion.

The opposition has accused the 67-year-old leader, who has been in power for the past 20 years, of being willing to risk people's lives and health to be able to stay in the Kremlin by resetting his constitutional term limit.

Russia on Wednesday reported 8,536 new coronavirus cases and 178 deaths in the last 24 hours.

Moscow, the epicentre of the Russian outbreak, registered 1,842 new cases.

With a total tally of 423,277 cases, Russia has the third-highest caseload after the United States and Brazil.

A total of 195,957 people have recovered.

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