Iran's daily virus infections top 10,000

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Iran's daily novel coronavirus infections crossed the 10,000 mark on Monday, the health ministry announced, setting a new record as fatalities remained close to their all-time high level.

The latest official figure of 10,463 positive COVID-19 cases in a 24-hour period comes only three days after the Islamic republic

exceeded 9,000.

Iran's coronavirus caseload now stands at 692,949, the ministry said.

The virus also claimed 458 lives in the past day, raising the country's overall number of fatalities to 38,749.

The previous fatality record of 459 came on Sunday, according to official figures.

Iran recently imposed several rounds of short-lived restrictions across the country to contain the virus, but the rising deaths and infections have prompted calls by experts and officials for a full lockdown.

Tehran's governor Anoushirvan Mohseni-Bandpey said on Monday that the lockdown proposal was no longer on the agenda as a new set of measures had since been unveiled, state news agency IRNA reported.

The measures, announced on Saturday and set to last a month from Tuesday, force the closure of non-essential businesses such as malls, small retailers, cinemas and gyms from 6:00 pm until the next morning.

It would apply to Tehran, provincial capitals and certain highly populated cities, according to the national anti-virus taskforce.

Iran has not imposed a full lockdown since it was hit by COVID-19 in February, with President Hassan Rouhani arguing the country's sanctions-hit economy cannot afford to be shut down for an extended period.

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