

Turkey passes 25,000 COVID-19-related deaths

January 25 2021



People, some wearing masks to help protect from the spread of the coronavirus sit on a square in Eminonu market in Istanbul, Friday, Jan. 22, 2021, hours before the start of a two-day weekend curfew. The country of 83 million rolled out its vaccination drive a week ago, starting with health care workers as well as nursing home residents and their care-givers. More than 1 million people received the first of two doses of the vaccine developed by China's Sinovac pharmaceutical company in the first week. (AP Photo/Emrah Gurel)

Turkey on Sunday passed 25,000 COVID-19-related deaths since the start of the outbreak in March, the health ministry said.

A toll of 140 new fatalities saw the total figure rise to 25,073. Turkey has recorded more than 2.4 million infections since the first case was recorded on March 11.

The government reintroduced restrictions at the start of December, including weekday evening curfews and weekend lockdowns, to stem another surge of infections.

Restaurants and cafes have been restricted to takeout services, weddings and funerals are limited to 30 people and people over age 65 and under 20 are banned from using [public transport](#).

"We all observe that the street restrictions are having a great impact on both the number of cases and the decrease in the number of patients," Mustafa Necmi Ilhan, a member of the government's scientific advisory committee, said Saturday.

"It's necessary not to rush lifting the restrictions but when the number of cases and patients drops, of course they can be lifted."

The [number](#) of daily cases has fallen to around 6,000 in recent days from a high of more than 33,000 in December.

Turkey began its vaccination program on Jan. 14, initially focusing on health workers and the elderly. More than 1.2 million people had been given a first dose of the Chinese CoronaVac vaccine as of Saturday night, Health Minister Fahrettin Koca said.

About 6.5 million doses were due to arrive from China on Monday, he added. Turkey earlier received an initial consignment of 3 million doses.

Turkey signed an agreement with Russia on Saturday to produce the Sputnik V vaccine.

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