

Iran sees highest daily virus case, death counts in pandemic

August 8 2021



In this photo released by the official website of the office of the Iranian Presidency, President Ebrahim Raisi receives his first shot of the Covid-19 COVIran Barekat vaccine, in Tehran, Iran, Sunday, Aug. 8, 2021. On Sunday, Iran reported more new infections and deaths across the country than on any other single day since the pandemic began. In the face of U.S. sanctions that complicate banking transactions and deep-rooted suspicion of the West, Iran has vigorously promoted the local production of coronavirus vaccines, doling out the experimental COVIran Barekat vaccine to most healthcare workers. Credit:

Iranian Presidency Office via AP

Iran, grappling with its most severe surge of the coronavirus to date, reported more new infections and deaths across the country on Sunday than any other single day since the pandemic began.

Health authorities logged over 39,600 new cases and 542 deaths from the virus. The fatality count shatters the previous record set during Iran's deadliest coronavirus surge that gripped the country last November, signaling the current wave will likely only get worse. The new all-time highs push Iran's total number of infections over 4.1 million and [death toll](#) over 94,000—the highest in the Middle East.

The crush of new cases, fueled by the fast-spreading delta variant, have overwhelmed hospitals with patients too numerous to handle. The country has never seen so many COVID-19 patients in critical condition, with 6,462 more severe cases reported Sunday.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has the final say on all state matters, last week ordered officials to discuss the possibility of a total national shutdown. The government has been loath to enforce such a lockdown, fearing the damage it would do to an economy reeling from years of American sanctions.

Iran's sputtering vaccination campaign hasn't helped matters. Only 3.3% of the [total population](#) of some 80 million has been fully vaccinated, according to data compiled from government sources by the Our World in Data project at the University of Oxford.



In this photo released by the official website of the office of the Iranian Presidency, a medic prepares a shot of the COVIran Barekat Covid-19 vaccine for President Ebrahim Raisi, in Tehran, Iran, Sunday, Aug. 8, 2021. On Sunday, Iran reported more new infections and deaths across the country than on any other single day since the pandemic began. In the face of U.S. sanctions that complicate banking transactions and deep-rooted suspicion of the West, Iran has vigorously promoted the local production of coronavirus vaccines, doling out the experimental COVIran Barekat vaccine to most healthcare workers. Credit: Iranian Presidency Office via AP

In the face of U.S. sanctions that complicate banking transactions and deep-rooted suspicion of the West, Iran has vigorously promoted the local production of coronavirus vaccines, doling out the experimental COVIran Barekat vaccine to most healthcare workers. Iran's government

announced that its domestic vaccine provides 85% protection from the coronavirus, without disclosing data or details.

The country's newly inaugurated hard-line president, Ebrahim Raisi, publicly received his first dose of the COVIran Barekat shot on Sunday. He urged [public health officials](#) to speed up vaccinations before winter weather sets in, state-run media reported.

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