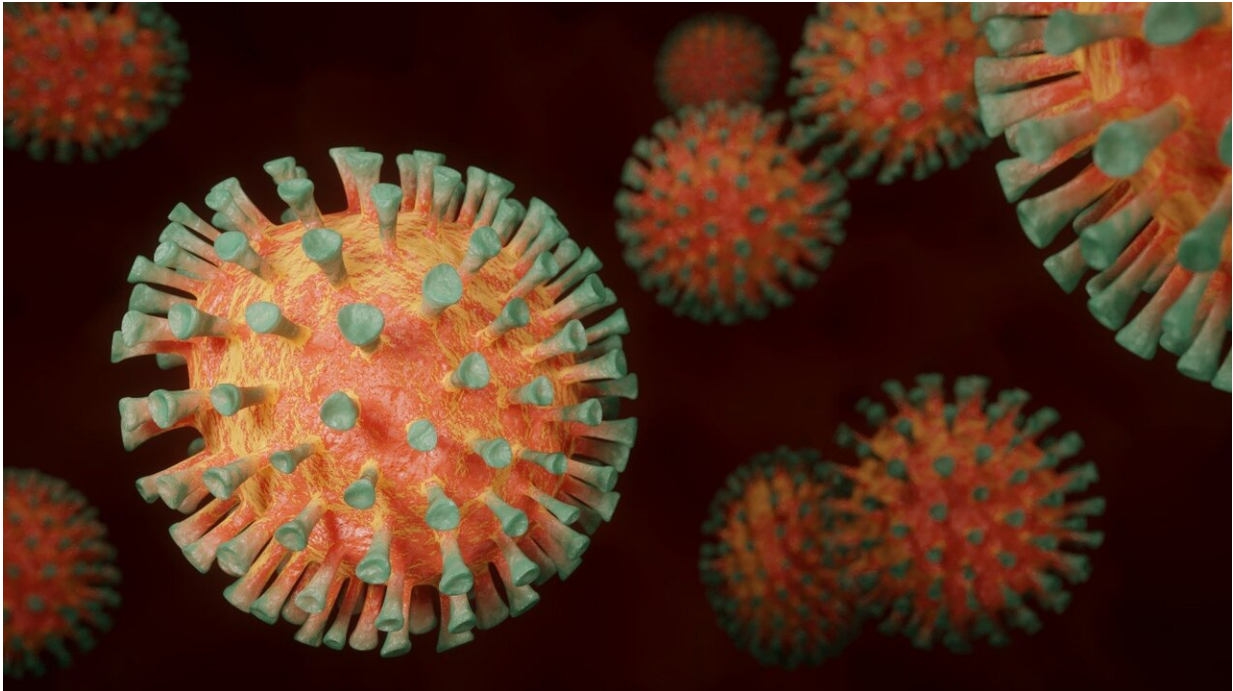


# Russia posts record daily virus fatalities

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Russia on Thursday reported its highest daily coronavirus death toll since the start of the pandemic, as a third wave persists despite an intensifying vaccination drive.

A government tally reported 808 fatalities over the past 24 hours—the first time Russia has crossed the 800-mark for daily virus deaths—and 21,932 new infections.

Russia, the fourth worst-hit country in the world in terms of cases, according to an AFP tally, has been swept with an unrelenting third wave since mid-June that has been driven by the Delta variant.

Authorities have faced a vaccine-sceptic population, with a poll by the independent Levada Centre this week showing that 55 percent of Russians do not plan on getting a jab.

Moscow, the epicentre of Russia's outbreak, and a host of regions have introduced mandatory vaccination measures to speed up the country's inoculation drive, and President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly called on Russians to get vaccinated.

But as of Thursday, just 28.8 million of Russia's some 146 million people had been fully vaccinated, according to the Gogov website, which tallies COVID data from the regions.

With 168,049 deaths from the virus, Russia has the highest official COVID-19 toll in Europe—even as authorities have been accused of downplaying the severity of the country's [outbreak](#).

Under a broader definition for deaths linked to the coronavirus, statistics agency Rosstat said that Russia has seen more than 300,000 fatalities as of the end of June.

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