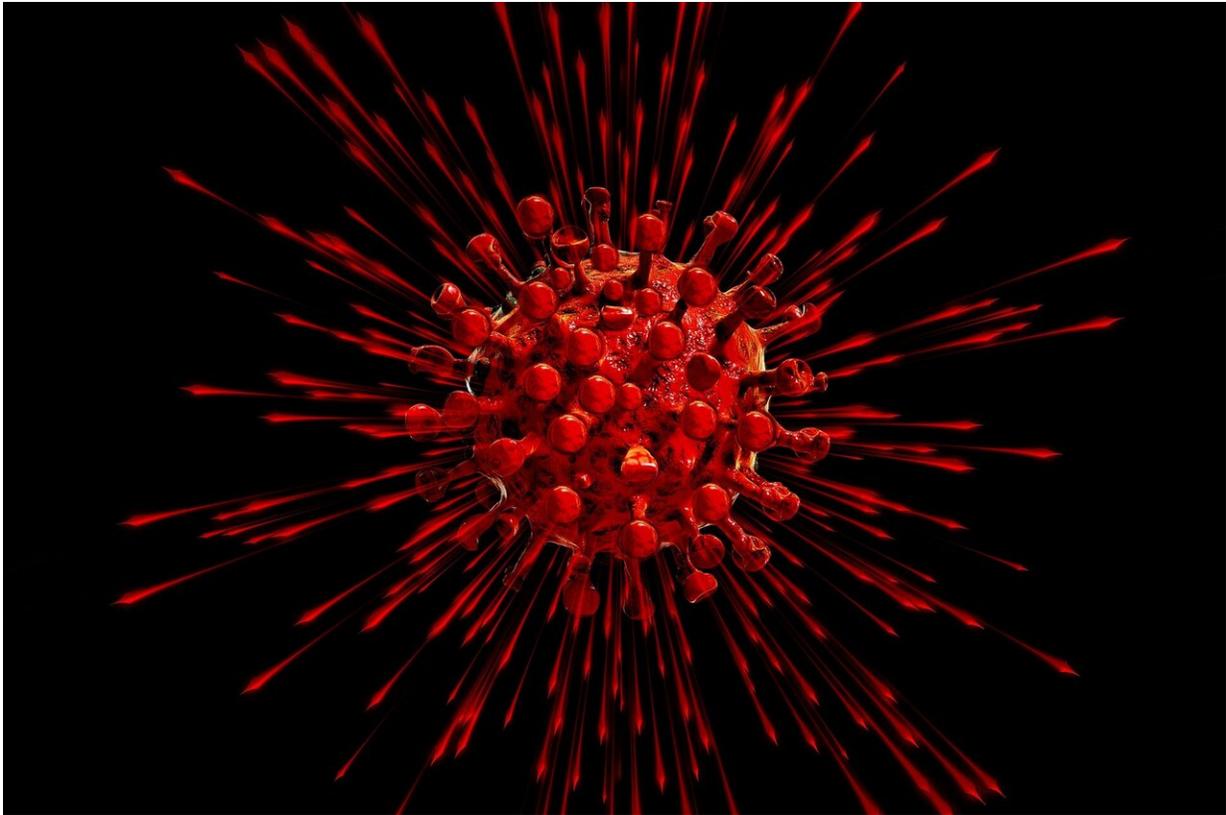


# Russia again posts record coronavirus deaths

July 6 2021

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Russia reported 737 coronavirus deaths on Tuesday, a national record of pandemic-related fatalities over a 24-period, as the country battles a new surge in cases.

It marks the first time Russia, the fifth worst-hit country in the world for

the number of infections, has crossed the 700-mark for daily virus deaths.

Russia has set six new pandemic highs for COVID-19 deaths in the last eight days as it fights a surging outbreak driven by the highly transmissible Delta variant.

In Moscow, the epicentre of Russia's outbreak, the Delta variant first identified in India now accounts for 90 percent of new cases, the city's mayor Sergei Sobyenin has said.

He has ordered offices to send home a third of their unvaccinated employees and restaurants to allow inside only patrons who have been vaccinated or infected in the past six months.

He has also mandated that 60 percent of service industry workers must be fully inoculated by mid-August.

As of Tuesday, just 1.8 million of Moscow's population of 12 million had been fully vaccinated, according to the Gogov website, which tallies COVID data from the regions.

Nationwide the total stood at just 18.2 million of Russia's some 146 million people.

Authorities have faced a vaccine-sceptic population, with an independent poll this week showing that 54 percent of Russians do not plan on getting a COVID jab.

The Kremlin had set a goal of fully inoculating 60 percent of Russia's population by September, but conceded last week that it would not be able to meet that target even though free jabs have been available since early December.

With 139,316 deaths from the virus, Russia has the highest official COVID toll in Europe—even as authorities have been accused of downplaying the severity of the country's outbreak.

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Citation: Russia again posts record coronavirus deaths (2021, July 6) retrieved 19 September 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-07-russia-coronavirus-deaths.html>

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