

Qatar coronavirus cases pass 100,000 mark

Author:

Mon, 2020-07-06 17:27

DOHA: Qatar passed the milestone of 100,000 coronavirus cases on Monday, the health ministry said, as the country presses ahead with plans to re-open its economy.

The gas-rich emirate has one of the world's highest per capita infection rates with 100,345 people, 3.65 percent of its 2.75 million population, having tested positive for COVID-19.

Almost 94,000 of those infected have recovered and 133 people have died, one of the lowest reported death rates globally.

Wealthy Qatar has a higher testing rate than many other countries, having screened 386,111 people – 14 percent of the population.

“Measures taken to tackle COVID-19 in Qatar have succeeded in flattening the curve and limiting the spread of the virus,” the ministry of public health said in a statement, adding there were a total of 546 new cases and five deaths in the last 24 hours.

“We are seeing a rise in the number of deaths in recent weeks and this is due to the people who were infected at the height of the virus several weeks ago.”

Qatar has continued to reopen segments of its economy in recent weeks subject to strict social distancing measures as the average daily number of new cases has continued to fall.

In the past seven days there were an average of 748 new cases per day compared to 958 the week before.

Sun-lovers and jet-ski enthusiasts braved scorching summer temperatures on July 1 to be among the first to take advantage of reopened beaches, closed since March.

Beachgoers were required to wear masks, have temperatures taken and show mandatory phone-based contact tracing apps, as were customers of cafes and restaurants which resumed limited dine-in services last Wednesday.

Masks remain compulsory in public for those not exercising and private gatherings are limited to five people.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Coronavirus](#)

[COVID-19](#)

[Qatar](#)

Stuck in Qatar: Canadians told they could be fired for leaving COVID-19 hot zone
Qatar Airways will not take new aircraft in 2020 or 2021, CEO says

[Iran admits fire at Natanz nuclear facility caused 'significant damage'](#)

Sun, 2020-07-05 20:06

DUBAI: A fire that broke out at Iran's Natanz nuclear facility on Thursday has caused significant damage that could slow the development of advanced centrifuges, an Iranian nuclear official said on Sunday.
Iran's top security body said on Friday that the cause of an incident and fire at Natanz had been determined and would be announced later. Some Iranian officials have said it may have been caused by cyber sabotage and one warned that Tehran would retaliate against any country carrying out such attacks.
"The incident could slow down the development and production of advanced

centrifuges in the medium term ... Iran will replace the damaged building with a bigger one that has more advanced equipment," state news agency IRNA quoted the spokesman for Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation, Behrouz Kamalvandi, as saying.

"The incident has caused significant damage but there were no casualties." Three Iranian officials who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity on Friday said they believed the fire was the result of a cyber attack but did not cite any evidence.

On Thursday, an article by Iran's state news agency IRNA addressed what it called the possibility of sabotage by enemies such as Israel and the United States, although it stopped short of accusing either directly.

Israel's defence minister said on Sunday it was not "necessarily" behind every mysterious incident in Iran.

In 2010, the Stuxnet computer virus, widely believed to have been developed by the United States and Israel, was discovered after it was used to attack Natanz.

The Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant (FEP), Iran's main uranium enrichment site which is mostly underground, is one of several Iranian facilities monitored by inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog.

The IAEA said on Friday the location of the fire did not contain nuclear materials and that none of its inspectors was present at the time.

Natanz is the centrepiece of Iran's enrichment programme, which Tehran says is only for peaceful purposes. Western intelligence agencies and the IAEA believe it had a coordinated, clandestine nuclear arms programme that it halted in 2003.

Tehran denies ever seeking nuclear weapons.

Iran agreed to curb its nuclear programme in exchange for the removal of most international sanctions in a deal reached between Tehran and six world powers in 2015.

But Iran has gradually reduced its commitments to the accord since US President Donald Trump's administration withdrew from the deal in 2018 and reimposed and intensified sanctions that have battered Iran's economy.

The deal only allows Iran to enrich uranium at its Natanz facility with just over 5,000 first-generation IR-1 centrifuges, but Iran has installed new cascades of advanced centrifuges.

Israel has backed Trump's "maximum pressure" policy on Tehran aimed at forcing it to agree a new deal that puts stricter limits on its nuclear work, curbs its ballistic missile programme and ends its regional proxy wars.

Iran says it will not negotiate as long as sanctions remain in place.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Iran](#)

[Natanz](#)

[nuclear](#)

Khojir and Natanz explosions wreck Iran's strategy of deception
Chlorine gas leak at plant sickens 70 in southeast Iran

[Chlorine gas leak at plant sickens 70 in southeast Iran](#)

Author:

Associated Press

ID:

1593886451448093000

Sat, 2020-07-04 18:02

TEHRAN, Iran: A chlorine gas leak at a petrochemical center in southeast Iran sickened 70 workers, state-run IRNA news agency reported Saturday. Most of the workers at the Karun petrochemical center in the city of Mahshahr in southeast Khuzestan province were released after undergoing medical

treatment.

Meanwhile, in the city of Ahvaz, also in Khuzestan, a fire at the Zergan power plant was ignited when a transformer exploded, IRNA reported Saturday. The blaze was contained by firefighters after two hours of battling the blaze.

Mohammad Hafezi, the power plant's health and safety manager, told IRNA the cause of the fire was under investigation.

The two incidents in Iran's oil-rich Khuzestan come after a fire and explosion at a centrifuge production plant above Iran's underground Natanz nuclear enrichment facility early Thursday.

Officials said the cause of the fire at Natanz is known to officials, but won't be immediately released for "security reasons."

On Tuesday, an explosion from a gas leak in a medical clinic in northern Tehran killed 19 people.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[chlorine](#)

[Iran](#)

[Karun](#)

Fire flares at Iranian power plant, latest in series of incidentsIran threatens retaliation after what it calls possible cyberattack on nuclear site

[UAE adopts new government structure, full announcement to come on Sunday](#)

Author:

Reuters

ID:

1593885769378041000

Sat, 2020-07-04 17:55

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates has adopted a new government structure, involving the merger of ministries and agencies, the country's vice president and ruler of Dubai said on Saturday, adding that the full announcement would be made on Sunday at noon (0800 GMT).

The decision aims "to produce a government that is more flexible and fast and keeping pace with change," Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum said on Twitter.

In May, he said the country would review the structure and size of its government as part of its strategy for dealing with the effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

الإخوة والأخوات .. أعلننا في 13 مايو 2020 عن نيتنا مراجعة هيكل حكومة الإمارات.. ووعدنا بإجراء تغييرات .. ودمج وزارات وهيئات .. للخروج بحكومة أكثر مرونة وسرعة ومواكبة للمتغيرات .. اعتمدت قبل قليل الهيكل الجديد .. ونعلنه غداً في الثانية عشر ظهراً بإذن الله..

– HH Sheikh Mohammed (@HShkMohd) [July 4, 2020](#)



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[UAE](#)

[Abu Dhabi](#)

[Dubai](#)

[Sharjah](#)

UAE allows citizens and residents to travel abroad Social media reveals how people feel about reopening UAE

[Jordan slaps wristbands on arrivals to monitor virus quarantine](#)

Author:

AFP

ID:

1593880047487620700

Sat, 2020-07-04 15:58

AMMAN: Jordan began putting electronic bracelets Saturday on travelers who have recently arrived in the country to ensure that they observe home-quarantine against the spread of coronavirus, an official said.

People arriving in Jordan must isolate for 14 days at hotels designated by the authorities on the shores of the Dead Sea, west of the capital Amman. After that period, they must self-isolate for an additional 14 days at home, according to Nizar Obeidat, spokesman for Jordan's virus task force. He told state-run Al-Mamlaka television that "the use of the electronic bracelet began on Saturday for those self-isolating at home" in order to ensure quarantine rules are respected.

Jordan imposed tough measures, including curfews and the deployment of drones, to curb the spread of COVID-19, before easing policies in early June. The kingdom has so far registered 1,147 coronavirus infections, including only 10 deaths.

But health authorities have almost daily been reporting new cases among Jordanians and foreigners entering the country.

They have also maintained measures such as social distancing and the compulsory use of face masks in most public places, with those breaking the rules fined.

Several countries around the world have turned to electronic tracking devices including bracelets and smart watches connected to special apps to contain the spread of coronavirus.

In March, Hong Kong began ordering all arrivals from overseas to wear electronic bracelets to monitor observance of quarantine.

South Korea, China, Taiwan and Singapore have also employed a range of tech solutions to tackle coronavirus.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Coronavirus](#)

[Jordan](#)

[Quarantine](#)

Jordan announces smoking crackdown in coronavirus fightJordan injects \$705.2m into its private sector