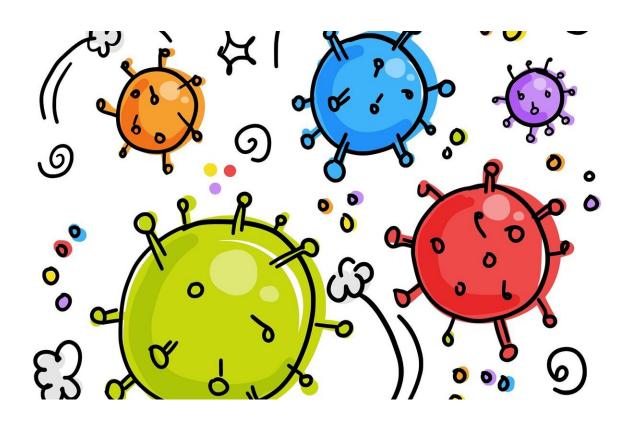# India reports record daily cases in coronavirus battle

July 5 2020

Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

India added a record number of coronavirus cases Sunday, as the world's fourth worst-hit nation opened a huge treatment centre with 10,000 beds in the capital to fight the epidemic.

The health ministry reported just under 25,000 cases and 613 deaths in

24 hours—the biggest daily spike since the first case was detected in late January.

The surge took India's total tally to more than 673,000 cases and 19,268 deaths.

It came as the capital New Delhi started treating patients at a spiritual centre converted into a sprawling isolation facility and hospital with 10,000 beds, many made of cardboard and chemically coated to make them waterproof.

About the size of 20 football fields, the facility on the outskirts of the city will treat mild symptomatic and asymptomatic cases.

State government officials fear Delhi, home to 25 million people, could record more than half-a-million cases by the end of the month.

The city has repurposed some hotels to provide hospital care. It is also converting wedding halls and has several hundred modified railway coaches standing by.

A strict lockdown in place since late March has gradually been lifted, allowing most activities as the economy nose-dived amid the shutdown.

But the number of cases across the vast nation of 1.3 billion people has climbed steeply and is now close to surpassing badly-hit Russia.

Schools, metro trains in cities, cinemas, gyms and swimming pools remain closed and international flights are still grounded.

Authorities have made wearing masks mandatory in public places, while large gatherings are banned and shops and other public establishments are required to implement social distancing.

The western state of Maharashtra, the worst-hit state and home to financial hub Mumbai, recorded over 7,000 new cases while Southern Tamil Nadu state and Delhi recorded more than 4,200 and 2,500 fresh cases respectively.

Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai, Tamil Nadu's capital, are the worst-affected cities.

The national government says it has tackled the virus well but critics allege India is conducting very few tests, leaving the true scale of the pandemic unknown.

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