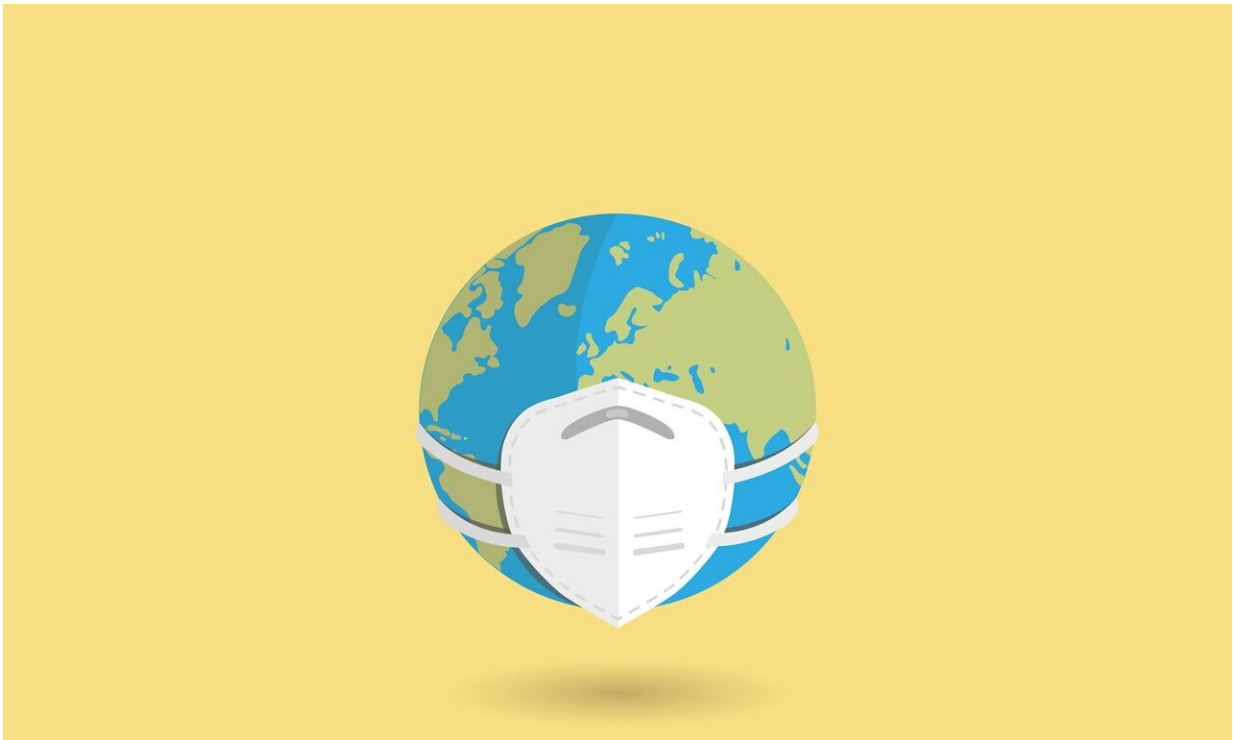


Spain virus death toll tops 70,000: health ministry

March 3 2021



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Spain's coronavirus death toll surged past the 70,000-mark on Wednesday, health ministry figures showed, after the country in February suffered its second-worst month for virus deaths since the start of the pandemic.

However, the number of daily infections continued its downwards trend as the country appears to have turned the corner of the third wave of infections.

Another 446 people died in the previous 24 hours, pushing the overall toll to 70,247, the ministry said.

As in many other countries, the real [death](#) toll is thought to be far higher, given that many victims died in spring without undergoing a [diagnostic test](#) at a time when the health system was completely overwhelmed.

Spain recorded a total of 10,528 fatalities in February alone, the worst figure since April 2019, at the height of the first wave of infections when 16,354 people died.

Confirmed cases of COVID-19 rose by 6,137 over 24 hours, taking the total number of infections to 3,136,321.

But after a post-Christmas surge in which daily infections exceeded 40,000, Spain's third wave is receding, with the two-week incidence rate falling to 159 cases per 100,000 people on Wednesday from 900 at the end of January.

Like other countries in Europe, Spain is setting its hopes on an immunisation campaign—more than 1.2 million people have so far been inoculated with a double dose of the vaccine.

The government of Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez wants to have up to 70 percent of the population vaccinated by the end of the summer, maintaining the target despite widespread delays in vaccine deliveries.

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