
Worldwide COVID-10 fatalities exceed 102,000

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The number of deaths from the new coronavirus' pandemic has exceeded 102,000, with the United States, where the death toll has topped 18,300, leading other countries in terms of the total number of infections.

By early Saturday, from among the nearly 1,685,000 cases of infection worldwide, more than 493,300 belonged to the United States.

Officials were warning Americans to expect alarming numbers of coronavirus deaths this week. The top U.S. infectious disease expert had warned on Friday that it was too early to relax restrictions on Americans. "Now is no time to back off," Dr. Anthony Fauci said.

So far, only Italy with 18,849 fatalities has lost more people to the outbreak.

Also on Friday, however, U.S. President Donald Trump said he would soon be announcing a council to focus on re-opening the country after, what he called, its overcoming of the worst of the pandemic. "We will be announcing that in a short while. Probably Tuesday," Trump told reporters in a briefing.

He also said he thought the United States would lose fewer than the 100,000 lives as initially projected to the coronavirus.

In a throwback to his trademark demand for a wall on the country's southern border with Mexico as a supposed barrier against illegal migrants, Trump, meanwhile, said the coronavirus pandemic had come to underline the importance of "national borders."

