

Fauci warns U.S. COVID-19 outbreak may worsen after holidays

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Washington, December 28 (RHC)-- The United States' top infectious disease expert has warned that holiday travel could push the country to a "critical point" in the coronavirus pandemic and that the worst may be yet to come. "I share the concern of President-elect [Joe] Biden that as we get into the next few weeks, it might actually get worse," Dr Anthony Fauci told CNN on Sunday.

The doctor noted that in recent weeks, there has been a surge in COVID-19 cases, hospitalisations and deaths across the country. The U.S. has recorded an average of 185,903 new infections over the past seven days, while the number of people in hospital with the disease reached 117,344, according to COVID Tracking Project data.

On Sunday, the number of cases recorded in the U.S. topped 19 million as the death toll from the disease surpassed 332,000, both by far the highest totals in the world.

Holiday travel in the United States this year was significantly lower than in previous years, but air travel averaged more than one million passengers a day for six consecutive days last week, according to the Transportation Security Agency.

Following last month's Thanksgiving holiday, US coronavirus cases surged sharply in December, with more than 200,000 new cases and at times more than 3,000 deaths daily. With intensive care units in many hospitals near capacity, Fauci reiterated that the country might be facing a "surge upon a surge."

Surgeon General Jerome Adams, in an interview with ABC on Sunday, also said he was "very concerned" about the post-holiday surge. But with new vaccines now moving across the country -- going first to front-line health workers and those in long-term care facilities -- Americans have seen a glimmer of hope.

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