

Saudi ends lockdown despite spike in infections



Riyadh, June 22 (RHC)-- Saudi Arabia has ended a nationwide coronavirus curfew and lifted restrictions on businesses, including hair salons and cinemas, after three months of stringent curbs, despite a spike in infections.

Prayers were also allowed to resume in mosques in the holy city of Mecca, state media reported, just weeks before the annual hajj pilgrimage is due to start.

International flights and religious pilgrimages, however, remain suspended and social gatherings of more than 50 people are prohibited, according to the interior ministry.

The kingdom, which has the highest reported coronavirus infections in the Gulf, has seen a spike in cases after it began a phased easing of stringent lockdown measures in late May. On Sunday, the total number of infections rose to 157,612, while the death toll climbed to 1,267, according to data from the health ministry.



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