

Jordan to continue night curfew even after virus outbreak 'contained'

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Tue, 2020-05-05 16:03

AMMAN: Jordan is to continue to impose a daily night curfew even after containing the spread of the new coronavirus and allowing businesses to reopen and more movement, a government spokesman said on Tuesday.

Amjad Adailah said the Cabinet, which imposed a curfew on March 21 after enacting emergency laws that gave the government sweeping powers, would also continue to impose a weekend lockdown.

"We have contained the outbreak but the danger is real and the possibility of its return is real and serious," Adailah said.

Jordanians took to the streets after a ban was lifted on driving and many businesses reopened in a rapid return to normality after the authorities relaxed a tough nearly 50-day curfew to stem the spread of the coronavirus. Prime Minister Omar al Razzaz said in remarks on state television that the country's early tight lockdown measures had brought results that were far better than expected.

The government has not registered any coronavirus cases for the eighth day in a row, Razzaz added. The country has had a total of 465 cases and nine deaths.



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Young Jordanians showcase 'talent from home' for hit contest Jordan lifts all curbs on economic activity in latest easing of lockdown

[Lebanon extends virus shutdown, PM warns of second wave](#)

Author:

Reuters

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Tue, 2020-05-05 14:46

BEIRUT: Lebanon extended its coronavirus lockdown by two weeks on Tuesday with the prime minister warning that failure to comply with a gradual easing of curbs risked a second wave of infections.

Lebanon has recorded 741 cases of the novel coronavirus and 25 deaths. The government started to ease some restrictions this week, allowing restaurants

to open but at only 30% of capacity.

In an apparent reference to low rates of infection, Prime Minister Hassan Diab said the general assessment was “excellent.”

But he also told a meeting of the country’s supreme defense council that “citizens did not comply with the restrictions and measures that are being gradually reduced.”

This “could reflect negatively on the spread of the virus and there is a fear of a second wave which could be much harder than the first,” he said, according to a statement issued after the meeting.

The government formally extended the shutdown until May 24 at a cabinet meeting later on Tuesday.

Economic activity would still be allowed to resume gradually under a previously defined time frame. The security forces and army would be asked to act strictly to prevent violations.



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Lebanon relaxes coronavirus restrictions by opening seaside promenades, restaurants

[Yemeni minister warns of forced war](#)

recruitment operations in Houthi areas

Author:

Tue, 2020-05-05 12:47

DUBAI: Yemen's Information Minister Muammar Al-Iryani warned against the escalation of the forced recruitment of civilians by the Houthi militia in areas under the militia's control due to the continuous losses of its fighters on the frontlines.

Referring to the militia as "the mercenary of Iran," the minister slammed the Houthis for the enforced recruiting campaign that takes four civilians from each neighborhood in the capital Sanaa with the aim of training them to use weapons on the battlefield, state news agency Saba News reported.

The minister claimed the Houthis are using civilians "as fuel for its absurd war on the Yemeni people" after suffering heavy losses in battle fronts in the provinces of Al-Jouf, Marib and Al-Bayda.

The compulsory recruitment of civilians into the war by the Houthi militia of citizens in its areas of control by the use of pressure and threat

The Houthis use threats to pressure civilians into fighting and killing large groups of people, Al-Iryani said, adding that the civilians were used as human shields for the militia who serve to expand Iran's influence in the region.

Al-Iryani said the Houthi militia continued to violate the truce and commit human rights violations despite international calls for a ceasefire and unified efforts to confront the threat of the coronavirus.

The Yemeni Supreme National Committee to confront the coronavirus recording two new cases of coronavirus in Hadramout, southeastern Yemen, on Monday, which raised the number of confirmed cases in Yemen to 12 cases.



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[Sudan says US approves ambassador, first in two decades](#)

Author:

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Mon, 2020-05-04 16:28

KHARTOUM: Sudan announced Monday that the United States had approved Khartoum's pick of a veteran diplomat as ambassador to Washington, the first such envoy in over two decades.

Ties between Khartoum and Washington had been strained during the three-decade dictatorship of Omar al-Bashir, but eased after he was ousted by the

army last year following mass protests.

Sudan's Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok visited Washington in December and the two countries agreed to exchange envoys.

In a statement, Sudan's foreign ministry said Monday "the US government approved the nomination of Nour Eddin Satti as an ambassador and plenipotentiary of the Republic of Sudan."

A veteran diplomat, Satti served as Sudan's ambassador to France in the 1990s and later worked with United Nations peacekeeping missions in Congo and Rwanda.

Monday's step of recognising Satti as Sudan's first to Washington since 1998 comes as part of "normalising relations" between Khartoum and Washington, the ministry said.

Sudan is currently ruled by a transitional administration that took power in August last year after Bashir's fall.

During the Islamist strongman's rule, Washington slapped sanctions on Sudan and designated the country as a state sponsor of terrorism.

Hamdok's government has sought to bolster its international standing and mend ties with the US.

In February, Khartoum agreed to compensate the families of American victims of a suicide bombing targeting navy destroyer USS Cole in Yemen's Aden harbour in 2000.

The attack was claimed by Al-Qaeda.

The US had for years accused Sudan, which once hosted the global network's leader Osama bin Laden, of training and supporting the attackers.

Sudan always denied the charges but agreed to the settlement to fulfil a key US condition to remove it from Washington's terrorism blacklist.

The 1993 designation by Washington has decimated Sudan's economy.



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Sudan moves to criminalize female genital mutilation

[Syria's Assad warns of 'catastrophe' if coronavirus cases spike](#)

Author:

Reuters

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Mon, 2020-05-04 16:18

AMMAN: Syrian President Bashar Assad warned on Monday that the country could face a "real catastrophe" if coronavirus cases spike and overwhelm health services.

The current low level of infections did not mean Syria had escaped the "circle of danger", Assad said in an address to the government committee that oversees measures to curb the pandemic.

"These figures could suddenly spike in a few days or few weeks and we would see in front of us real catastrophe that exceeds our health and logistical abilities," he said.

The government imposed a nationwide curfew over a month ago after announcing its first officially confirmed coronavirus case following weeks of denying claims of a cover-up expressed by medical sources and witnesses who said there were many more cases.

Syrian has now reported 44 confirmed cases and three deaths. U.N. bodies and humanitarian workers have warned that the country is at high risk in the event of a major outbreak due to a fragile health sector and a lack of resources.

Under pressure to soften the economic impact on the sanctions-hit country ravaged by a nine-year civil war, the authorities have eased the lockdown in the past week and allowed a wide range of professions and businesses to return to work



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