

Saudi records 60th MERS virus death

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Saudi health authorities have announced the death of a young man from the MERS coronavirus, bringing the death toll from the respiratory disease in the kingdom to 60.

The health ministry website said the latest victim of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome in the country is a 22-year-old who was also suffering from cancer.

Saudi Arabia, the country worst hit by MERS, has recorded 145 cases, of which 60 have now proved fatal, since the virus first appeared in September 2012.

Experts are struggling to understand the disease, for which there is no vaccine.

MERS is considered a deadlier but less-transmissible cousin of the SARS virus that erupted in Asia in 2003 and infected 8,273 people, nine percent of whom died.

The World Health Organisation says on its website that the WHO has now been told of 182 cases of MERS infection worldwide, and 79 deaths.

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