

Sharp increase in COVID-19 cases in Peru and Chile

June 1 2020



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Peru on Sunday reported 8,800 new COVID-19 infections, setting a new daily record for a country that already has the second highest number of novel coronavirus cases in Latin America after Brazil.

The [death toll](#) is now at 4,506, the third highest in the region—itsself the new hotspot of the deadly disease—after Brazil and Mexico, with President Martin Vizcarra warning the country is only halfway through the crisis.

Infections have jumped in Peru despite a months-long mandatory lockdown and a nighttime curfew and the government ordering international borders to be closed.

The spike is concentrated around the capital Lima, where one third of the population lives, and put tremendous strain on Peru's economy and healthcare system.

Four out of every ten Peruvians lost their source of income when the lockdown began, according to one study, and last week Peru secured a two-year, \$11 billion credit line from the International Monetary Fund.

'Tremendous challenge' in Chile

Neighboring Chile on Sunday reported 57 more fatalities in the past 24 hours, a new record that brings the country's COVID-19 death toll to 1,054.

"We are facing the largest pandemic of the past 100 years," said Deputy Health Minister Paula Daza, as she announced the latest figures.

"It is a tremendous challenge; we are living very difficult times in our country."

In Santiago, where the 80 percent of the virus cases were reported, 96 percent of the emergency room beds were taken, officials said.

Officials reported a sharp increase in cases over the past two weeks.

In early May the government of President Sebastian Pinera said that the number of virus cases had hit a plateau, and lockdown restrictions would be loosened.

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Citation: Sharp increase in COVID-19 cases in Peru and Chile (2020, June 1) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-06-sharp-covid-cases-peru-chile.html>

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