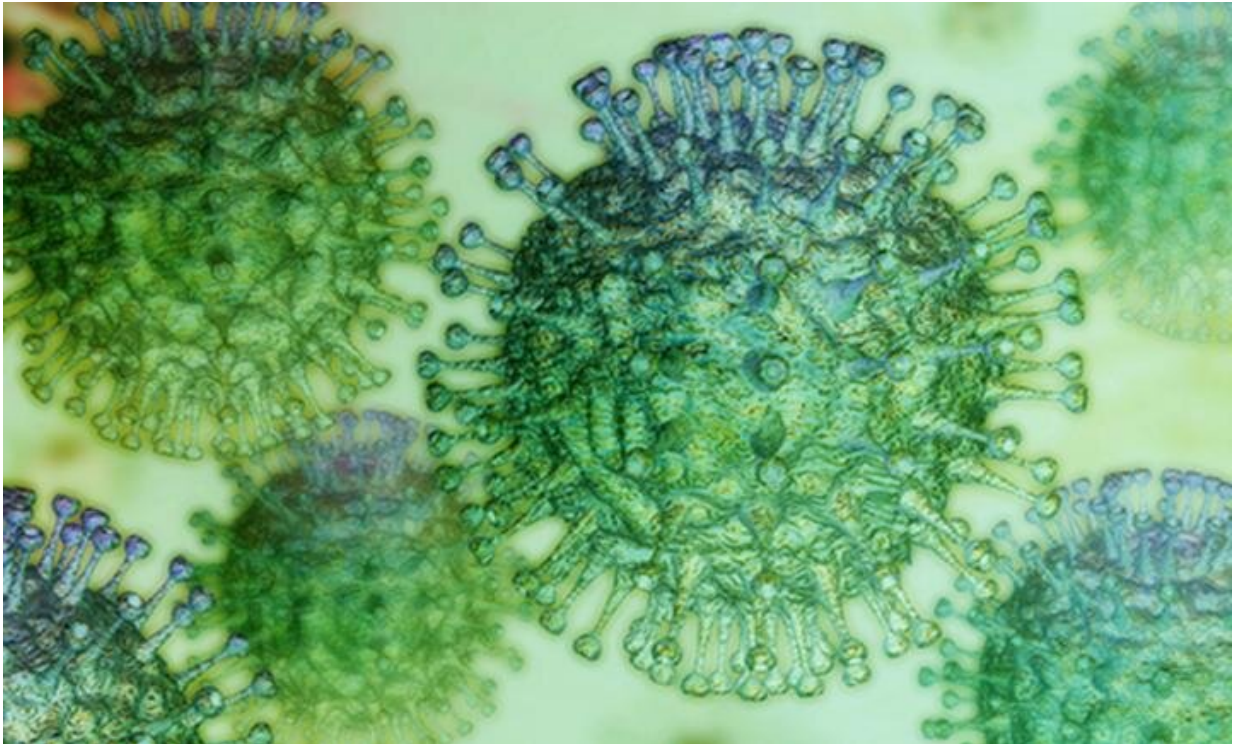# Lebanon daily virus cases spike

July 12 2020

Coronavirus. Credit: European Centers for Disease Control

Lebanon on Sunday reported 166 coronavirus cases, its highest daily infection toll since the country's outbreak began in February.

The new figures announced by the health ministry bring the total number of infections to 2,334 including 36 deaths, according to figures carried by the state-run National News Agency (NNA).

New cases have leapt since Friday, with over 300 registered in three days, after daily numbers had appeared to be stabilising in recent weeks.

The Lebanese Red Cross said on Twitter that its teams were transporting 131 company employees who had tested positive to a quarantine centre.

Health Minister Hamad Hassan said those cases were among the 166 announced Sunday, and that the figure represented a "peak".

But he appeared to play down the spike, saying the latest infections were from a "known source" and telling local media that the chances of further transmissions existed but were "not big".

Lebanon had started to gradually lift lockdown measures since the end of April and opened its airport to commercial flights at the start of this month, after a more than three-month closure.

In May, the government ordered a four-day return to lockdown after an uptick in new cases.

The pandemic arrived with Lebanon already mired in its worst-ever economic crisis, marked by an unprecedented plunge in the currency and with nearly half of the population in poverty.

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