

Peru facing fourth wave of COVID-19: government

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Peru's government on Sunday declared that a fourth wave of COVID-19 infections had begun to hit the country, which has one of the highest mortality rates from the virus in the world.

"We are currently in a fourth wave, as we have seen the increase (of

cases)... in different provinces of our country, such as Junin, Arequipa, Cusco and the capital," Health Minister Jorge Lopez told local broadcaster RPP radio.

According to official figures, infections increased from 1,800 per week at the beginning of the month to more than 11,000 in the last week.

The increase has not so far led to a significant rise in hospitalizations or deaths.

At least 65 percent of the country's eligible population have received three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, with more than 80 percent having received at least two doses.

Those aged over 40 are eligible to receive a fourth dose.

Peru experienced its third wave of the pandemic between the end of 2021 and February 2022, with a peak of almost 50,000 infections per day on average in the third week of January.

There are currently 833 hospitalized patients with COVID-19 in the country, down from a record 15,547 in March 2021.

A nation of 33 million people, Peru has seen more than 213,000 deaths due to the coronavirus since the pandemic began, according to US-based Johns Hopkins University.

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