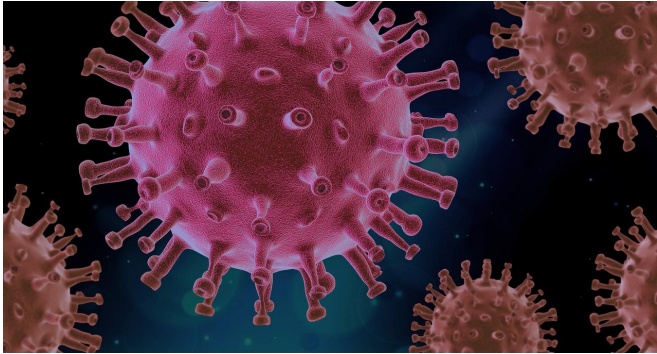


Iraq records 12,000 COVID infections in new daily high

26 July 2021



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Iraq has recorded 12,180 COVID infections over the past 24 hours, the health ministry said on Monday, the highest number detected in a single day so far in the pandemic.

More than 1.5 million people have now tested positive and 18,347 have officially died of COVID-19 in Iraq, where the health infrastructure is dilapidated.

Much of the 40-million-strong population remains sceptical of vaccines, with only 1.3 million having been inoculated, the [health ministry](#) says.

It is not clear how many of those have received two jabs.

Monday's record "unfortunately, does not surprise us because of a lack of respect for mandatory hygiene measures such as a ban on gatherings and mask wearing", ministry spokesman Saif al-Badr said.

"This increase is probably due to the large number of gatherings during the Eid" al-Adha festival marking the end of the annual Muslim hajj pilgrimage, he said.

The authorities have struggled to persuade people to get vaccinated and to abide by measures such as wearing [face masks](#) in public.

Earlier this month, Sarmad al-Qarlousi, who heads Baghdad's Al-Kindi Hospital, warned that unless more people get jabbed, Iraq will spiral towards "an epidemiological catastrophe".

The ministry spokesman has blamed a reluctance to get inoculated on a "misinformation campaign which preceded the arrival of the vaccine".

On Monday Badr renewed his appeal to Iraqis to get vaccinated, saying the spike in infections is putting pressure on the country's fragile [health infrastructure](#).

Two huge fires at COVID-19 hospital wards in April and in mid-July killed more than 120 people, sparking anger and defiance among Iraqis who blame corruption for the failing [health](#) system.

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APA citation: Iraq records 12,000 COVID infections in new daily high (2021, July 26) retrieved 25 October 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-07-iraq-covid-infections-daily-high.html>

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