

# *South Africa returns to restrictions as COVID-19 surges*

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Pretoria, July 12 (RHC)-- South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said the country will immediately return to a ban on the sale of alcohol to reduce the volume of trauma patients so that hospitals have more beds open to treat COVID-19 patients.

Confronted by surging hospitalisations due to the coronavirus, South Africa is also reinstating a night curfew to reduce traffic accidents and made it mandatory for all residents to wear face masks when in public.

Ramaphosa said in a nationally televised address that top health officials warn of impending shortages of hospital beds and medical oxygen as South Africa reaches a peak of COVID-19 cases, expected between the end of July and September.

"While the surge of infections has been expected, the force and the speed with which it has progressed has, quite understandably, caused great concern," said Ramaphosa. "Many of us are fearful of the danger this presents for ourselves, and for our families."

The country has reported increases of more than 10,000 confirmed cases for several days and the latest daily increase was nearly 13,500. South Africa accounts for 40% of all the confirmed cases in Africa, with 264,184, including 3,971 deaths, according to the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Sunday.

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