

Students return to schools in South Africa



Pretoria, June 9 (RHC)-- In South Africa, children started returning to classrooms on Monday as part of a gradual loosening of lockdown restrictions even as some parents worried that not enough had been done to protect the health of pupils.

The reopening of schools was delayed after teachers' unions urged school staff to defy the government order last week, saying schools lacked sufficient health and hygiene measures to keep educators and pupils safe.

Minister of Basic Education Angie Motshekga said that ramped-up efforts to equip schools over the past week meant that 95 percent of South Africa's primary and secondary schools were now able to host classes, and the biggest teachers union dropped its resistance to the reopening.

"The golden rule is there will be no school that will resume if not ready to do so," Motshekga said. The government will find alternative arrangements for pupils at schools unable to open, she said.

South Africa has recorded nearly 50,000 cases of the new coronavirus -- the most of any African country -- along with almost 1,000 deaths.



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