

Spain declares state of emergency to stem soaring COVID-19 cases



Madrid, October 25 (RHC)-- The Spanish government has declared a new state of emergency and ordered a nationwide curfew in an effort to curb soaring coronavirus infections. "We are living in an extreme situation ... it is the most serious in the last half-century," Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez told a news conference after a cabinet meeting on Sunday. "The reality is that Europe and Spain are immersed in a second wave of the pandemic," he said.

The drastic measure goes into force from Sunday night and will require all regions except the Canary Islands to impose a nighttime curfew from 11 pm to 6 am (22:00-05:00 GMT). It will remain in place for at least two weeks, and any further extension would need parliamentary approval, according to the constitution. "The more mobility, the more infections," said Sanchez, who said he hoped to extend the state of emergency up to May 9, 2021.

This week, Spain became the first European country to surpass one million officially recorded COVID-19 cases, though Sanchez has admitted the true figure could be three times higher due to gaps in testing

and other factors.

A growing number of regions had been calling on the government to implement the state of emergency, which allows regional authorities to introduce lockdowns and travel bans in certain cases.

Regional leaders will also have authority to limit gatherings to six people who do not live together.

As of Sunday, Spain had recorded 1,046,132 coronavirus cases and 34,752 related deaths.

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