

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation Report



Weekly Report No. 256 - Saudi Arabia

16-22 September, 2021

	Global		Eastern Mediterranean Region	
	COVID-19 Cases	COVID-19 Deaths	COVID-19 Cases	COVID-19 Deaths
Current	229,373,963	4,705,111	15,545,768	284,701
Last Week	225,680,357	4,644,740	15,317,719	279,814

Saudi Arabia

	Confirmed Cases	Recovered Cases	Deaths	Active Cases	Critical Cases	PCR Tests
Total	546,735	535,711	8,679	2,345	303	28,544,333
in 7 days						
15/9/2021	85	49	5	2,382	405	49,548
16/9/2021	75	64	6	2,387	378	53,730
17/9/2021	68	77	5	2,373	361	42,429
18/9/2021	70	81	5	2,357	343	44,013
19/9/2021	63	71	6	2,343	339	45,291
20/9/2021	69	48	5	2,359	317	55,495
21/9/2021	54	61	7	2,345	303	55,051

Vaccination in KSA

Total of Doses Administered	Total of 1 Dose	Total of 2 Doses
41.3 million	23.2 million	18.1 million

HIGHLIGHTS

- Regions with the highest new infections over the past 7 days: Makkah (122), Riyadh (113), Eastern (50), Madinah (42), Al Qassim (34), Jazan (26), Asir (21) and Najran (20).
- All COVID-19 vaccination centres continue providing service during the National Day holiday.
- MoH launches a promotional campaign encouraging everyone to take the second dose of the vaccine.
- Saudi Arabia donates 5 oxygen generators to Tunisia to support efforts to combat COVID-19.
- Ministry of Education: vaccination rate among Ministry staff reaches 96.9% and among students aged 12 or older 90.5%.
- Ministry of Hajj: Tourist and visit visa holders can perform Umrah by registration on Eatmarna and Tawakkalna applications. SR10,000 will be fined to who tries to perform Umrah without a permit.
- WHO publishes guidance for surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 variants: Interim guidance, 9 August 2021, see link
- WHO launches interim guidance on critical preparedness, readiness and response actions for COVID-19, see link.
- WHO publishes digital documentation of COVID-19 certificates: vaccination status: technical specifications and implementation guidance, see link.
- WHO publishes holding gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic: WHO policy brief, see link.
- WHO publishes guidance on utilization of COVID-19 vaccines before the date of expiry, see link.

IMPORTANT LINKS

- **MoH COVID-19 updates:** <https://twitter.com/saudimoh>
- **WHO's COVID-19 global situation reports:** <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports>
- **WHO's COVID-19 dashboard:** <https://covid19.who.int/>
- **MoH COVID-19 dashboard:** <https://covid19.my.gov.sa/ar/Pages/default.aspx>
- **Guidance for surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 variants:** https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO_2019-nCoV_surveillance_variants
- **Critical preparedness, readiness and response actions for COVID-19:**
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/critical-preparedness-readiness-and-response-actions-for-covid-19>
- **Digital Documentation of COVID-19 Certificates: Vaccination Status:**
https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-Digital_certificates-vaccination-technical_briefing-2021.1
- **Holding gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic: WHO policy brief:**
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/holding-gatherings-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-who-policy-brief-2-august-2021>
- **Guidance on utilization of COVID-19 vaccines before the date of expiry**
<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/guidance-on-utilization-of-covid-19-vaccines-before-the-date-of-expiry>

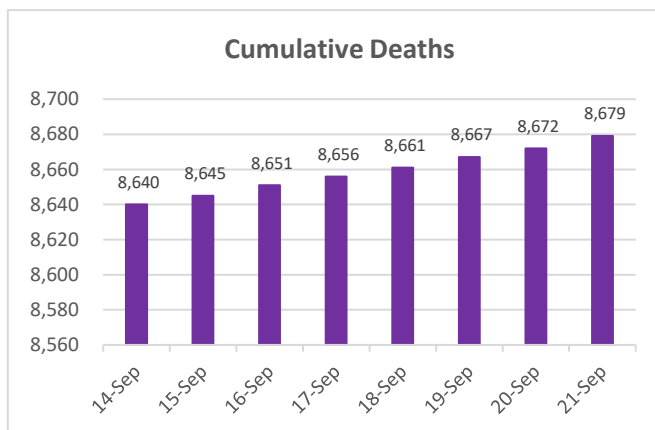
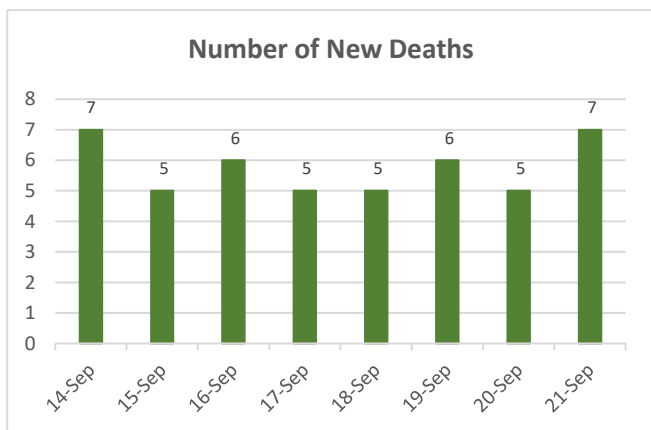
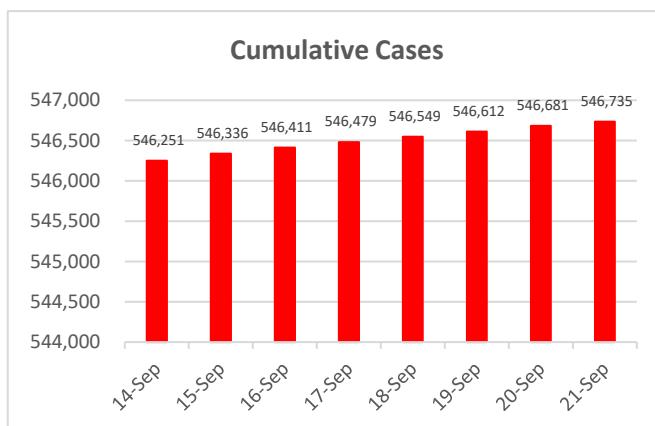
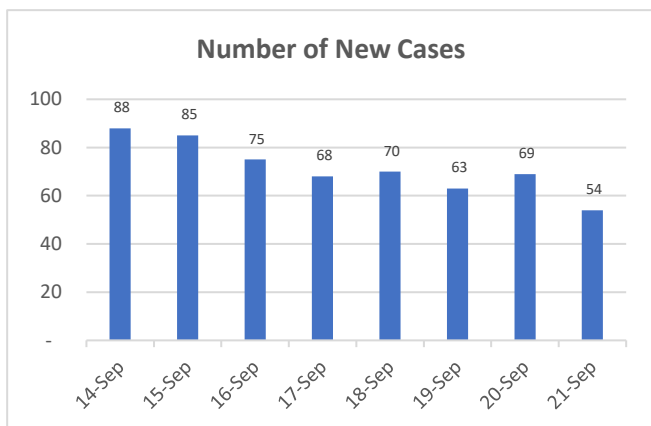
IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

Update on COVID-19 Variants of Interest and Variants of Concern

WHO, in collaboration with national authorities routinely assesses if variants of SARS-CoV-2 alter transmission or disease characteristics, or impact vaccine, therapeutics, diagnostics or effectiveness of public health and social measures applied by national authorities to control disease spread. “Signals” of potential Variants of Concern (VOCs) or Variants of Interest (VOIs) are detected and assessed based on the risk posed to global public health.

As surveillance activities to detect SARS-CoV-2 variants are strengthened at national and subnational levels, including through the expansion of genomic sequencing capacities, the number of countries reporting VOCs continues to increase.

Based on the latest round of assessments, variant B.1.621 was classified as a VOI on 30 August 2021 and given the WHO label “Mu”. The Mu variant has a constellation of mutations that indicate potential properties of immune escape. Preliminary data show a reduction in neutralization capacity of convalescent and vaccinee sera similar to that seen for the Beta variant, but this needs to be confirmed by further studies. Since its first identification in Colombia in January 2021, there have been a few sporadic reports of cases of the Mu variant and some larger outbreaks have been reported from other countries in South America and in Europe. Although the global prevalence of the Mu variant among sequenced cases has declined and is currently below 0.1%, the prevalence in Colombia (39%) and Ecuador (13%) has consistently increased. More studies are required to understand the characteristics of this variant.



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

- The National Focal Person for COVID-19 is Dr Abdullah Asiri, Assistant Deputy for Preventive Health, MoH, email: AbdullahM.Asiri@moh.gov.sa